

# The Adventures of Tropical Tramp

Harry L. Foster



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**THE ADVENTURES OF A  
TROPICAL TRAMP**





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THE AUTHOR AT MOROCOCHA, PERU

# THE ADVENTURES OF A TROPICAL TRAMP

BY  
HARRY L. FOSTER

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS  
TAKEN BY THE AUTHOR



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DEDICATED To  
MY MOTHER  
WHO WAITED ANXIOUSLY AT HOME  
As MOTHERS USUALLY WAIT

26353



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**THE ADVENTURES OF A  
TROPICAL TRAMP**



# THE ADVENTURES OF A TROPICAL TRAMP

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE LURE OF SOUTH AMERICA

“**W**HY do you want to go to South America? Killed somebody?”

The captain of the tramp steamer looked me over critically. It was on the big government docks at Cristobal, in the Panama Canal Zone. I had just applied for a job as stoker, but a Palm Beach suit, a Panama hat, and a cane did not seem to be a convincing costume on the figure of an applicant for this position.

“Ever shoveled coal before?” he demanded.

“No, sir.”

“Just looking for adventure?”

“Yes, sir.”

His eyes became a little more kindly.

“Don’t do it, son. Go home. South America’s full of adventurers. They’re in every port along the coast—went down there to discover gold mines or start revolutions—all that kind of rot. Now they’re begging alms, starving, down and out. They’d sell a wooden leg to get the

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price of a square meal—only they'd spend the money for rum instead."

This was a new idea. According to the best fiction, they seemed to dig up buried treasure, shoot Mexican Pete or Greaser Mike, or whoever the local villain happened to be, marry the president's beautiful daughter, and live happily ever after.

"You're not the first one," continued the captain. "Every time I hit port a dozen fellows want to ship to South America. It's the war that did it. Those that got overseas want to see more of the world. Those that didn't get over feel that they've been cheated out of something, and they're looking for it now. I've taken lots of them to the tropics, and I've seen them a month later—on the beach, knocking cocoanuts off the trees for their dinner, just waiting for a boat to take them home. No, sir, you can't travel with me."

That happened nearly two years ago.

I was working at the time as a shoe-clerk in the Government Commissary at Cristobal, and while I had no illusions about the riches of the southern continent, I did feel that shoe-clerking was a painfully unromantic occupation.

It was not my chosen profession. Seized by the same wanderlust that has led so many other ex-soldiers into foreign lands, I had drifted down through Mexico and Central America, calling myself a free-lance magazine writer, but since the magazines seemed unanimous in declining to publish what I wrote, it had dawned upon me by



the time I reached Cristobal that the first requisite for a magazine writer of my particular species was a steady job of some sort. And since the government commissary was the first building I sighted upon landing in the Canal Zone, I had applied there.

"Do you know anything about shoes?" the manager inquired.

"Not a thing."

"Good. I'll put you in charge of the department. I need a white man there to see that the niggers come to work on time."

Thus began the most unromantic month of my life.

The government commissary supplied not only the army and navy, but also the canal's civilian employees and their families. The average employee's wife, like most women in the tropics where native servants are cheap, had few household duties to occupy her time, and it appeared that her popular amusement on the Canal Zone was to call daily at the shoe department and try on the entire stock, meanwhile telling me how they hurt her feet, and finally departing with a pleasant, "Good day; I'll be in again tomorrow."

The men, mostly mechanics, seemed to be fairly rational beings, knowing what they wanted and taking it whether it was or not. But although I was young and susceptible, I soon began to wonder whether shoe-clerks ever marry. The sight of a woman entering the shoe department

sent cold shivers up my spine. There was only one woman on the whole Zone that our shoes seemed to please. She was a little girl who waited daily outside the door in order to be the first one in, and she usually remained until the pangs of hunger forced her to go home. Over each pair she would exclaim rapturously:

“Oh, that feels just too lovely! Isn’t that just the nicestest ’tittle shoe? To-morrow I’m going to bring mama to buy it for me.”

But to-morrow she would be waiting at the door again, without mama, to repeat the same performance. I never figured out whether she was a bug on the subject of slippers or whether she came merely to enjoy the ecstasy of having her toes pinched by male fingers.

The shoe department seemed to be no place for a would-be writer of romance. Nor did the rest of the Canal Zone supply it. Since the completion of the big ditch it had become an orderly well-regulated American community, where everything ran according to rule, under the direction of a paternal but strict and all-powerful American governor—just like a huge military camp. The big locks, with smooth green lawns beyond, looked as if they had always been there. The streets were mostly paved, bordered by rows of palm trees, and backed by lines of employees’ cottages, each exactly like its neighbor, even to the furniture inside. The Canal Zone was more highly regulated and better ordered than the United States itself. As an

illustration of what Americans could do in the tropics, it was marvelous, but I wanted to see the big accomplishments in the making.

In the bachelors' quarters where I lived the riotous scenes of the construction period had disappeared. The men who now operated the locks were mostly unsentimental mechanics, who came home from their labor figuring in their minds the amount of overtime pay they were to receive for their twenty minutes' extra work. The host of swearing, fighting, drinking, sweating, working roughnecks who built the canal had moved on in search of new worlds to conquer.

Only a few old-timers remained—old fellows who had already roamed the earth until they had convinced themselves that there was nothing new left for them to ride, fight, see, smell, or taste. At night, as they gathered on the porch to rehash old memories, I caught strange snatches of their adventures:

"Yep, an' standin' there, big as life, with 'is foot on thê eight spiggotty cops, was old Guerilla O'Gallagher, with a beer bottle in 'is hand."

Or again: "D'ye know, that cannibal chief hadn't never seen a blond before I hit the feast, an' he sez to me, sez he, speakin' the cannibal dialect, sez he, 'If you'll stay here an' marry them eight daughters of mine——'"

Sometimes it was adventure; frequently it was romance—of a kind. Those who spend their lives in the tropics sometimes adopt the native viewpoint, which may be described charitably as

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“colorblind.” One day Old Barnum came to me. We called him Old Barnum because he claimed to have given the well-known circus man the original idea about one being born every minute. He had practiced the theory himself to the extent of traveling around South America selling credulous natives autographed pictures of the saints, autographing them himself with “Love, from St. Peter,” or similar inscriptions.

“The trouble with you, young fellow,” said Barnum, “is that you ain’t mixin’ none in society. Now you come out with me to-night. My gal’s got a peachy little sister.”

“What nationality?” I inquired suspiciously.

“I think it’s French or something.”

Fortunately she happened to pass us on the street a few minutes later.

“French, did you say?” I demanded, for she was as black as carbon.

“Yep. Comes from Martinique—French West Indies.”

Much that looks like romance when it appears in a book becomes merely sordid on closer acquaintance. Across the line in Colon, on Panamanian territory, were a few survivals of the old construction days. Here one found the Jamaican negro laborers of the building period, who had remained principally because they were too indolent to move elsewhere. Among their ramshackle dwellings were cabarets where painted women with hoarse, almost baritone voices, sang touching ballads about “Home” or “Mother”

when not drinking at the tables with the spectators. In fiction, these places had savored of the romantic and the picturesque; in real life they didn't.

The wanderlust had brought me to Panama eight years too late.

After a month, I wandered down to the dock, where the old sea captain refused my services. Possibly my make-up was wrong. I should have walked out to the mangrove swamps and rolled in muck before applying, but I had no extra suit of clothes.

The captain's words were discouraging. I had planned to work my way around South America, and had supposed that this was an original scheme, but he informed me that several fellows with a similar idea wanted to go with him on every trip.

"Ain't you never heard of tropical tramps?" asked Barnum later. "Lots of fellows—some of 'em college graduates—is doin' it regular. Big men, railroad superintendents an' everything—lots of 'em—but they just can't help the wanderlust."

As I walked back to the shoe department, I was almost reconciled to the job. At the entrance, the manager met me.

"News for you, Foster," he announced. "Headquarters warehouse has just sent us two thousand pairs of women's shoes, and we're going to advertise a sale. Next week will be 'Ladies' Week' in the Shoe Department."

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Ladies' Week in the Shoe Department! The King's Birthday in Ireland! Old Home Week in Hades! I could not resign then without being a quitter. But I tendered my resignation to take effect at the end of the sale. Then I secured a map of South America, closed my eyes, and jabbed with a pin. The pin landed in Peru. When I collected my month's salary, minus deductions, I had just about enough for deck passage on a native coasting steamer to Callao, the seaport for the Peruvian capital.

The steamship office was near the dock, and as I came out, I ran into the old sea captain. He shook his head solemnly.

"The young fools will go there. I don't understand it."

Not being a shoe-clerk, he probably couldn't.



## CHAPTER TWO

### DOWN THE WEST COAST IN THE STEERAGE

**A**S I came aboard the Peruvian steamer *Mantaro* at the Cristobal dock, a kinky-haired native steward seized my suitcase.

“Which stateroom, señor?”

I showed him my ticket. He immediately dropped the suitcase.

“You’ll find the steerage deck back there.”

I did. The steamers of the Pacific Coast are of a peculiar type, designed by some Glasgow Scotchman laboring under the popular impression that the tropics are always warm. Not only are the first-class staterooms on deck, but the steerage quarters are entirely so, and exposed to the four winds.

On the wide open-spaced stern I sat on my suitcase and looked at the one other passenger. He was arrayed in a most glorious green-and-yellow checked suit, with a purple-striped silk shirt and a blue necktie, and his headpiece appeared to be a cross between a high hat and a derby. The costume excited my curiosity, but I hesitated to inquire if he, too, were traveling third-class, lest he prove to be the owner of the ship. So I sat there and twiddled my cane, and looked at him,



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and he sat there and twiddled his cane and looked at me.

Finally I broke the silence—in English.

“Where are you going?”

He responded in the same language.

“Veree well, zank you.”

Spanish brought better results. He came from Madrid, where he was a great bullfighter, and was now on his way to Lima to win fame and fortune.

“So am I,” I said.

“What? Then the señor is also a great bullfighter?”

“No; I’m a great writer.”

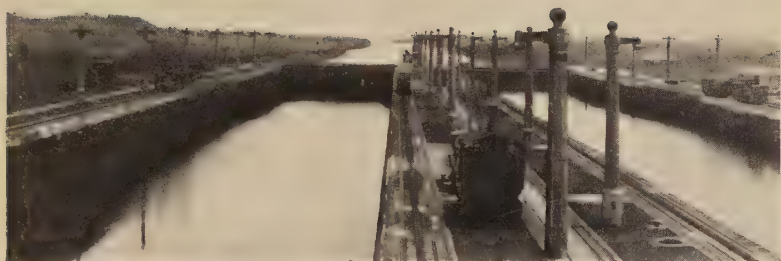
“But surely, do great writers travel third-class?”

I explained that nothing I had written had ever been published.

“Ah, the señor is like me. I have never killed the bull.”

The first-class cabins were filled up, but when the steamer pulled out into the Pacific, author and athlete alone occupied the back deck. At nightfall we called a steward to inquire where we were supposed to sleep, and learned that our tickets, which read “On deck,” were to be taken literally.

A three days’ run brought us to the northern coast of Peru—the driest spot on the Western Hemisphere. To the average American who thinks of South America as a land of tropical luxuriance, this Peruvian coast is always a sur-



GATUN LOCKS, PANAMA CANAL ZONE



NATIVE BOATMEN ON THE WEST COAST



prise. (The Pacific side of the continent really consists of three longitudinal strips of distinctly different country—a barren stretch of brown sand along the coast, as rainless as Sahara; a mountainous Andean chain behind it, as lofty and gloomy as Tibet; and finally in the far interior, the land of impenetrable jungle which the uninformed stranger fancies to comprise all South America.)

And of the three types of country, the coastal desert is quite the least attractive. Such cities as exist are merely ports for some fertile valley back in the interior, and even these valleys are fertile only as a result of irrigation. Such a port was Paita, where we made our first stop. Notices posted about the ship warned passengers that any one who went ashore would be quarantined afterwards for yellow fever and bubonic plague. The native pedlers who came alongside in small boats looked pallid and sickly.

Most of them were selling Panama hats, which, despite their name, are made either in Ecuador or northern Peru, and take their title from the fact that most of them are sold in Panama.

“How much for one of those hats?” demanded a first-class passenger—in Spanish, of course.

“Ten pounds, señor.”

Fifty dollars for a hat where the natives make them, when the same thing sells in the Canal Zone for five! But it was only due to the Peruvian custom of first asking several times what the merchant expects to get.

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The notices posted about the ship threatening quarantine if we went ashore did not seem to debar local residents from coming on board the ship. Every man of real or fancied prominence in Paita came out to stroll around the deck, and have dinner in the dining saloon, and drink a few *copitas* of wine in the smoking-room. Many of them were bidding farewell to embarking passengers, for no Latin American goes on a journey without ceremony, but most of them had come aboard merely from desire to see and be seen.

The Latin loves to pose, and does so frequently with no expectation of convincing the onlookers, but merely because it amuses himself. When a ship arrives at one of these ports, all who can afford it come on board to strut around the deck in a white collar and yachting cap to make believe that they, too, are going on a journey.

Finally, after a long day of rolling in the swells off Paita, our whistle sounded. The visitors began to embrace the departing friends, resting the chin first on the right shoulder, then on the left, meanwhile administering the customary seven affectionate pats on each shoulder-blade. After that, they all decided that it was an occasion requiring one or more farewell round of drinks, and all retired to the smoking-room for another hour or two. The ship's officers, also being Peruvians, and therefore too polite to ask visitors to leave their ship, stood by and said nothing.

But the captain was an Irishman. Nearly all the native steamers are commanded by Anglo-

Saxons, since the owners are too familiar with the easy-going ways of their fellow-countrymen to entrust them with the problems of navigation. Several times when the hat vendors were swarming up the ladder and obstructing the gangway, the Irish captain had emerged from his cabin like an angry bull, and rushed them back into their tossing rowboats, kicking one of them into the water amid laughter and applause from the others. Finally, after repeated blowing of the whistle had accomplished nothing more than additional outbreaks of embracing and more retiring to the smoking-room for another sad farewell toast, the captain dashed among the strutting visitors and drove them over the side.

As the anchor chain began to rattle, the hat vendors were selling their ten-pound hats at one pound each.

We continued south along the barren coast, now with the foothills of the Andes visible in the far background. The bullfighter and I no longer had the back deck to ourselves. A motley horde of *cholos*, the half-breed Indians of the sierra, had come on board, bringing with them all their family possessions, including live-stock. Blankets and bedding, boxes and crates, sacks and bundles, covered the floor, and upon this unsightly débris huddled a mass of greasy, dirt-caked natives. Fighting cocks tied to every stanchion were crowing and flapping their wings, and straining to get at one another. Flea-bitten dogs shared the bedding with their similarly afflic-



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ted owners. Chickens escaped from their coops and were chased squawking across the huddled mass. The mongrel curs belonging to one family declared war upon those of another. A cow brought on board by some comparatively wealthy *cholo* lost its balance and stepped on some one else's sheep, while an aggressive he-goat broke loose and ran amuck through a crowd of screaming children. Compared to that back deck a pig-pen would have looked like a Dutch kitchen, for the natives, with their unspeakably filthy and primitive habits, were no more sanitary than the animals themselves.

The Spaniard and I called a steward and pointed out that this was no place for distinguished authors and bullfighters. He agreed. For ten American dollars he would smuggle us into a first-class stateroom and bring us first-class food. This would leave me practically penniless when I reached Lima, but after watching my fellow passengers scratch themselves and hunt in each other's hair, I agreed.

"What are the chances of getting a job when I land?" I asked a first-class passenger, an Englishman who looked as though he might be an old-timer in Latin America.

"You mean you have no contract?" He raised his eyebrows. "Rather bad, you know. Firms are inclined to be a bit suspicious. Always a lot of bally rotters wandering around the tropics—fugitives from justice and that sort of thing. I

suppose you're all right, but one cawn't tell from appearances, you know."

He himself was a contract man—meaning that he had come to South America on a two-year agreement with some firm. Men of his class are invariably hostile to "tramps," who drift down looking for employment. He had entered into conversation with me under the supposition that I, too, was a first-class passenger, but upon discovering that I was not only "steerage" but also a "bally rotter" he promptly withdrew.

We were glad to avail ourselves of the first-class cabin to which the steward smuggled us at nightfall. Having partaken of a first-class dinner, which was first-class mainly by comparison with the stew we had eaten in the steerage, we propped our feet upon the bunk and smoked a pair of nefarious black cigars from the bullfighter's native land, in defiance of the "No smoking" sign on the wall.

"This comfort is more befitting to men of our exalted professions," said he.

"Right," said I.

After which, the author who had never had anything published and the bullfighter who had never killed a bull, retired like a pair of millionaires.

Sometime during the night a frightened steward awakened us.

"Get out quickly, señores."

"What's wrong?"

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"The captain has been drinking."

"I should worry. I'm not a prohibition agent."

"But when the captain drinks, he looks for trouble, and is coming this way."

We had barely climbed into our clothes when a red face appeared in the door.

"So it's here you are, is it? Get out of here. Go back with the other *cholos*."

We went. The bullfighter, being a little slow, was assisted.

It was a cold, cold night. I had always supposed the tropics to be warm, and we were almost on the equator, but the Antarctic current that comes up the Pacific Coast changes the climate in this particular spot. The native passengers had brought their bedding, and by huddling together were comfortable. In my Palm Beach suit I envied them. For a while the athlete and I ran races around the deck. Finally, exhausted but still shivering, we crawled into the center of the mass of live-stock and humanity, out of the wind, and went to sleep.

I awoke to discover that the numerous fleas which infested dogs and humans alike had hailed me as virgin soil. The bullfighter was already sitting up, scratching himself.

"Did you have a pleasant night?" I inquired.

"Carramba, no!"

"Fleas?"

"Fleas? No. I am accustomed to them."

"What was the trouble then?"

“That cow! It licked me in the face.”

My grin must have offended him.

“You laugh, señor, but you can not understand. You are not a bullfighter.”

For three more days we ran along the coast, stopping at Eten, Pacasmaio, and Salaverry, all of them mere collections of mud-and-cane houses on a desert beach.

At these stopping-places barges were towed out alongside the steamer, and while we rolled and pitched in the heavy swells, cotton or cattle were taken on for Lima. Loading was difficult. As the barges rose and fell and bumped into the steamer's side, the cattle lost their balance and skidded back and forth across the slippery deck. The natives who did the loading usually attached their rope to the cow farthest from the ship, so that as the crane began to lift the animal it hurtled and crashed into its neighbors, knocking them down like so many ten-pins. Amused passengers lining the rail would cry out:

“Set 'em up in the other alley.”

Watching embarking tourists leap from a tossing rowboat onto the ship's ladder was even more exciting. An old lady, supported by two husky boatmen, would stand upon the gunwhale of the skiff, shivering with fright as she waited for the ladder, now high above water, to descend with the rolling ship to sea-level. As the ladder surged down in a foaming sea, the boatmen would lift her toward it. Sometimes she might grasp it and scramble up to safety, but more than once the

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ladder, still on its descent, carried a passenger down to the knees in the rising wave.

It was interesting to note what happened to the American manufactured goods consigned to these ports. Hoisted high into the air and then allowed to drop with a crash into the floor of the barge, many of the boxes and crates were broken.

An American business man watching the proceedings became loud in his indignation.

"No matter how you preach to the packers at home," he exclaimed, "they can't understand the situation."

He told a story about his efforts to have his firm's goods packed more securely. Once at the factory, he had gone to the manager of the packing department.

"They're packed strong enough now," the manager had protested.

"All right, I'll show you."

The business man placed a crate on a hand-truck, ran with it, and dumped it over a balcony letting it fall thirty feet. The crate was broken.

"But you deliberately tried to break it!" protested the packer.

"Yes, you poor dub, I tried to break it. Let that sink through your dome. I tried to break it. There's many a stevedore down on the West Coast that will try to break it—so he can steal the contents."

From Salaverry it was a straight run to Callao—a dreary, monotonous run along a brown shore inhabited only by pelicans and sea-gulls,



by immense flocks of sea-gulls that coursed above the waves in thousands, diving in unison when they sighted a school of fish and sending up tiny spouts of water as they disappeared for an instant below the surface, spouts that seemed to cover the whole ocean, so large were the flocks of these birds.

The steward to whom we had paid ten dollars kept his bargain to the best of his ability by lodging us in the forecastle with the crew. They were a brown, ugly-looking lot, with matted black hair, and a cut-throat look, but the Peruvian is not inclined toward murder as a diversion, and we feared only for the safety of our suit-cases.

"Do not worry, señores," the steward assured us. "They steal only from first-class passengers."

We were relieved, nevertheless, when we finally entered the fog-wrapped harbor at Callao. Here a launch full of enthusiasts about the national sport met my bullfighter companion and carried him ashore with much cheering. After I had paid the boatman who rowed me ashore, I had twenty-two cents left. The "contract man" saw me returning them to my pocket.

"You'll 'ave a bloody fine time on that," he remarked with a note of satisfaction in his voice.

Yet, as I walked out of the customs house into the city of Callao, I felt a pleasurable little thrill. At last I was an adventurer, practically penniless in a strange land. But it did not take me long to discover that I was by no means unique in my



position. Callao, like most foreign ports, is filled with "beachcombers." I had not walked a block through the narrow dusty streets of the city, between rows of faded shops which advertised themselves in mixed Spanish and English as "The Mariners' Rest," or "The American Bar," before I had encountered a dozen fellow-countrymen of the sailor-without-a-ship-type—the down-and-outers of whom my old sea-captain had spoken.

One of them, a burly fellow in ragged clothing, accosted me.

"Say, Jack, have you got the price of a square meal? I'm a sailor—got me papers to prove it—but I missed me ship, an' I ain't had—"

"What's the fare to Lima?" I interrupted.

"Twenty cents. I been starving now for—"

Twenty from twenty-two left two. I offered him one cent. But he drew back, glaring at me.

"Yuh big stiff! Quit kidding me, or I'll bust yuh one in the face. You can't get nothing to eat for one cent in this town."

I hadn't thought about that! The truth of it took most of the pleasure from my thrill.

## CHAPTER THREE

### IN THE CITY OF THE KINGS

**L**IMA, the capital of Peru, is situated but a few miles inland from Callao Harbor. in a comparatively fertile valley where the River Rimac trickles down from the Andean foothills.

A very ordinary and unpicturesque trolley carried me out of the dusty port, across level green fields intersected by many ancient adobe walls, and dotted with occasional huts of mud and thatch, to deposit me—still hungry and with only two cents in my pocket—at the foot of Lima's principal thoroughfare.

Lima, like all South American cities, may be described as a city of contrast. Its streets, laid out by the *conquistadores*, are extremely narrow; its houses, many of them built by the same *conquistadores*, are quaint and fronted with aged wooden balconies. Over the whole place hangs an atmosphere of the old Spanish days, an atmosphere accentuated by many layers of dust which coat the entire city like the dust of ages.

Its people, however, as though trying to live up to its historic title as "The City of the Kings," array themselves like princes, affecting a degree of wealth and leisure which is truly regal. The

young bloods who leaned upon their canes or strolled in groups upon the narrow sidewalks of the principal thoroughfare were immaculate in their starched linen and high collars, and although I was respectably dressed myself, they made me feel self-conscious. I tried to jingle the two cents in my pocket as though they represented a million dollars, but the effort was futile. They merely clicked together in a tell-tale manner. No matter how the adventure-seeker may thrill at finding himself "broke" in a foreign country, his Anglo-Saxon blood is apt to make him too keenly aware of the fact that he is unemployed and useless to the community.

I did not know at the time that unemployment and uselessness were the unfailing marks of aristocracy in Lima, and that half of these young Peruvians, who looked and acted like the scions of wealth, had but little more real cash than I had. The early conquerors, who found in Peru a land of riches peopled by a race of docile Indians easily bullied into doing their work for them, have passed their traditions down to the present generation. To-day, when Anglo-Saxon engineers and promoters are pouring into the country, eager to develop its riches, the Peruvian heir takes life easy in the capital. If he is so fortunate as to hold political office, he wears fine feathers. If he is not so fortunate, he wears fine feathers anyhow, and waits for the happy day when a revolution may put him in office and enable him to pay his tailor's bill.

Although qualified by unemployment to be an aristocrat, my lack of either a political sinecure or temporary credit became increasingly apparent as lunch time receded and dinner time approached. There was nothing to do but keep on walking. The *siesta* hour passed, and the crowd of young princes upon the sidewalk increased. The leading amusement for young men in Lima during the late afternoon seemed to consist in draping themselves upon their canes along the street and surveying the pretty *señoritas* who strolled by.

The *conquistadores* evidently had not designed their sidewalks with this amusement in view, and walking at this hour was quite a problem. Peruvians are noted for their politeness, but it appeared that this politeness took the form of extreme courtesy toward their immediate companions to the neglect of other pedestrians. A Peruvian family out for a stroll always insisted on strolling abreast, and to pass a twenty-foot-wide family on a six-foot-wide sidewalk called for all one's ingenuity. The most expeditious method, I learned later, was to smoke one's cigarette in a long holder and to cock it at such an angle that it would stick into the other fellow's eye if he did not step aside.

Finally I reached the main plaza, a square park decorated with dust-laden palms, and surrounded by a huge cathedral on one side, a squatty government palace on another, and on the remaining sides by quaint buildings fronted by arches that

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came out over the sidewalk in true Moorish style. Not knowing exactly what else to do, I leaned on my cane, and admired feminine beauty, after the fashion of the other penniless princes.

“Hello, young fellow,” exclaimed a familiar voice in English.

I turned to see Judson, a mining engineer who had been on board my steamer. He was one of the tropical tramps who wander about these countries, and finding me an eager listener to his tales of adventure, he had wandered back to the steerage deck from time to time, during his more sober moments, to spin yarns. He seemed to guess my plight.

“What hotel are you stopping at?” he demanded.

“I haven’t stopped at any yet. I’m debating whether to go to the Ritz or the Waldorf.”

He looked at me sharply. Undoubtedly he had found himself in the same condition on numerous occasions.

“You’ll be my guest until you’re on your feet,” he said.

I protested.

“No arguments, now, young fellow. I’m only doing what other ‘tramps’ have done for me. When you’ve got money and you meet another American that’s hungry, you can pass it on.”

It was my first experience with the traditions of the road in South America. The informal fraternity of tropical tramps who drift from country to country in search of new scenes and

new adventures, includes any one from college graduate to illiterate, provided only that he possess the common failing of wanderlust and the common virtue of helping a fellow T. T. in distress.

One must not confuse the Tropical Tramps with the Beachcombers. A tramp works for his living, and is called a tramp merely because his love of adventure keeps him from working long in one place. A beachcomber, on the other hand, does not work, but insists on the alms he can wheedle from his fellow-countrymen with hard-luck stories. Judson was not merely a T. T., but a very high class T. T., capable of holding well-paid engineering positions.

He led me to the best hotel. Lima has just begun to develop from an old Moorish town into a modern city, and the best hotel is only a comparative term. Two Americans had come down with the intention of putting up a real first-class hostelry, but petty red tape in getting a concession from the city authorities had finally disgusted them and they had given up the project.

An illuminating story is told of the present leading hotel. An American who had secured a room with bath at double the usual rate discovered that the water system would not work. He went down to the desk and complained.

"No," the clerk admitted. "After we put the tub in there, we found that the city's water pressure was not sufficient to pump water to the third floor."



“That’s all right,” protested the American. “But you call it a room and bath, and you charge me extra for the bath.”

“Certainly,” said the clerk. “Look at our trouble and expense in putting the tub in there.”

Except to the tourist, Lima is rather disappointing. It is in the intermediate stage between the ancient and the modern; it is losing its old-world charm, and is only beginning to acquire the modernity of Santiago, Rio, or Buenos Aires. Its attractiveness is still further handicapped by its climate. For six months in the year scarcely a drop of rain falls, and during this period the dust accumulates. For the other six months a clammy fog hovers over the city, and instead of washing away the dust, merely seems to soak it in. The title, “The City of the Kings,” further conjures up in the mind of the visitor an illusion of grandeur which the hollow pretense of Lima fails to satisfy.

The tourist, however, who loves ancient carved doorways and old churches and such things, may find the city interesting. In the old days Lima was the center of ecclesiastical as well as political power in Spanish America, and to-day the view of the city from the hills back of it shows a church tower rising from nearly every block. There are seventy of them altogether, and the principal Cathedral is still pronounced the largest in Latin America, although the cathedral in Mexico City disputes the claim. The Lima Cathedral



makes a further bid for distinction by keeping the bones of Pizarro in its cellar.

Under Judson's guidance I did not visit these show-places, nor did I care to, never having understood why tourists continually hunt relics of the past instead of seeing a country's life in the present. Judson, like all permanent residents of these countries, scorned the show-places.

"Bones of Pizarro!" he exclaimed. "I've seen other bones, and I guess his aren't any different from anybody else's. Where do you plan to look for a job?"

I suggested the copper mines in the Andes, to which he was going.

"All right. But I'd better stake you to some heavier clothes. You can't go up there in a Palm Beach suit. If the cold didn't kill you, the miners would." To my protests against accepting a loan, he added: "All right! All right! You can pay me when you get your wages. I'm only doing what any good tramp ought to do for another."

There are plenty of stores in Lima. The middle-class Latin American is by nature and disposition a retail shop-keeper. His racial jealousy and distrust of his fellow workers make impossible that team-work which is essential to large industries. Nearly every Peruvian between the land-owning political class and the Indian laboring class is a retail merchant.

After looking over a multitude of shops, Jud-

son and I entered the one with the most promising window display.

"Have you any khaki shirts?" inquired Judson.

The clerk, who was staring out of the window at some passing señorita, shook his head and shrugged his shoulders.

"No señor," he replied absent-mindedly.

Judson, having spent several years in Peru, waited until the disappearance of the girl around the corner left the clerk free to attend to customers.

"Khaki shirts," he repeated.

"Ah, yes, señor."

"How much are they?"

"Twenty soles, señor."

Judson looked at the price tag.

"It says fifteen soles."

"Yes, fifteen soles, señor."

He did not ask whether we desired anything else. In fact, he showed considerable annoyance upon learning that we did. Yet he was very polite, and finally convincing himself that we were determined to buy, he condescended to wait upon us.

The man's attitude was by no means typical of Peru as a whole, but I learned by further experience that it was very typical of Lima. To seek eagerly after trade is to betray to one's neighbors the fact that one is not so wealthy as he pretends to be.

On the following morning, when we had secured

equipment in spite of the shop-keepers, Judson led me to the office of the Cerro de Pasco Copper Corporation, the largest American concern in Peru. Although in Panama I had secured a position without difficulty, every one I had met assured me that this was quite exceptional, and warned me that employers in South America would be suspicious of men who just drifted in looking for work.

An employee in the outer office, from his appearance a "contract man," shook his head doubtfully.

"You say you're just seeing the world and want to go up in the mining camps for a few months? I believe we do need office men on the Hill, but I don't think there's a chance for you."

He ushered me into the office of the manager, who regarded me without enthusiasm as I regaled him with an exhaustive enumeration of my many good qualities.

"Do you ever touch liquor?" he asked sharply.

"Yes, sir."

"Eh, what's that? I don't believe I heard you correctly."

He leaned forward, his brow wrinkled in a puzzled frown. "I want you to repeat that answer, speaking loudly and distinctly."

Just as the sins of a drowning man's whole life are said to pass through his mind in rapid succession, so the list of my debts to Judson passed through mine—hotel room 10 soles, dinner 6 soles, khaki shirt 15 soles, etc.—as I saw the likelihood of employment vanish. But it was too

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late to change my answer. I looked the manager in the eye, as George Washington would have done under similar circumstances.

“Yes, sir.”

He pressed the button, and the contract man entered.

“George, give this man a letter of introduction and a pass on the railroad.” Then to me: “Take Monday’s train, and report to Clark at the Smelter. Good day and good luck to you.”

“Wait a minute,” I interrupted. “Is drinking the principal qualification?”

“No. Decidedly not. The young fools up there drink entirely too much. Up in the high altitudes, drink will kill a man. I hired you because you’re the first applicant that ever answered my question truthfully.”

## CHAPTER FOUR

### OVER THE WORLD'S HIGHEST RAILWAY

**T**HE Central Railway of Peru, which carried me up into the Andes on the following morning, is reputed to be the highest and most picturesque railway in the world.

Traveling toward the back country of South America was equivalent to viewing a motion picture of the continent's history—except that the film ran backward, taking one from the modern to the primitive. Even before the cathedral towers of Lima had disappeared behind the train, I looked from the car window to see bamboo huts, with roofs of thatch, half-hidden among groves of banana trees.

It was a country almost unchanged since the days of the conquerors. The ancient mud walls that intersected the landscape, the tumbled down ruins of adobe villages, even the peasants toiling in the field, seemed to be of an age equal to that of the brown hills which lined the horizon. The track mounted swiftly toward the Andean heights. Within an hour and a half we were among the foothills of Chosica, Lima's select residential suburb; within another hour and a half Chosica's altitude of 2,800 feet had been doubled, and we pulled into San Bartolomé, Lima's fruit garden.

The people of San Bartolomé, it appeared, lived principally by picking oranges from the tree and then lying in wait for the railroad passengers. Here I caught a glimpse of the mountain *cholos*, the descendants of the races dominated by the Incas. They lined the station platform, most of them women, all of them squatted cross-legged on the ground in native fashion, dressed in a super-abundance of clothes which left one in doubt as to whether they were fat or thin, their hair down their backs in course, greasy braids, and on their heads white-felt mannish Panama-like hats. Their faces were Indian-featured, ruddy and red-cheeked from the cool mountain air, and their expressions solemn and unsmiling.

When they walked, it was with a long, swinging gallop, ungraceful and flat-footed—a system of locomotion inherited from their mountain-climbing ancestors, which, when transferred to the more level country of the foothills, gave one the ridiculous impression that they were still trying to skip from peak to peak.

Every woman had a rainbow-hued shawl over her shoulders, always with a heavy bundle behind the back. Frequently the bundle contained an infant, and invariably the infant was dressed exactly like its mother, with the same super-abundance of voluminous gaudy skirts, the same greasy braids of jet black hair, and the same mannish Panama hat. Its face wore the same solemn, unhappy but resigned expression, and I had the feeling that if it were put on the ground, it would





NATIVE HOUSE IN THE ANDES



THE HIGHEST AND MOST PICTURESQUE RAILWAY IN THE WORLD



go galloping away with the same flat-footed gallop.

Leaving San Bartolomé, with its one row of mud-plastered houses, the train backed away on the first of the line's 21 zig-zags or switchbacks. This style of railroad construction is necessary in the steep ascent which commences here, and from the time one leaves San Bartolomé until one arrives at Ticlio at the top of the mountain range, one never knows whether he is going or coming. The train is continually backing part way up the mountain, then running forward again, until after half an hour of steady riding one looks down at the same spot he saw several hundred feet higher. Occasionally for variety, one ascends a long *quebrada*, circles around, and comes back on the other side. It seems to the passenger as though the train were merely cutting geometric figures up and down the hillside, yet, it is always ascending, always getting a little closer to its objective.

Our next stop was Surco, the flower garden of Lima. On the platform were more *cholo* women, with dresses more voluminous than at San Bartolomé, and possibly another layer of dirt on their faces, indicating that the increasing altitude not only encouraged more the wearing of clothing, but discouraged more the taking of baths. The flowers which they sold, however, were beautiful. There were immense bouquets of violets, roses, and carnations, purchasable for a few soles when the train first arrived or for a few centavos just before the train departed. Every

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passenger on board purchased a bouquet or two, sweet and fragrant and dripping wet, and out of consideration for his friends in his own seat, hung his dripping purchase on an adjacent hat rack where it dripped on strangers in the seat behind.

As we continued the ever-ascending journey, it was noticeable that with the growing coolness of the air the bamboo huts gave way to solid adobe structures. The flowers of Surco vanished from the landscape; the bananas and sugar cane of the lower altitudes gave place to cactus—to the corrugated, misshapen trunks of the *pitahaya* or to the wide bluish leaves of the *aguey*. The country began to resemble the plateaus of central Mexico.

At eleven o'clock the train stopped at an adobe village called Matacana, where every one left the first-class coaches and rushed into the local hotel for *almuerzo*, or lunch, or breakfast, or whatever the translator chooses to call it, for the Latin American drinks but a cup of coffee upon rising and takes his real breakfast at this hour.

The arrival of the train was an exciting event in Matacana, not only for the natives, but also for the passengers. In the hotel there was but one waiter to serve about sixty of us, a worried-looking little *cholo* who tried vainly to listen to all of us at once. Before I could explain to him in my broken Spanish that I did not object to his fish soup but that I did object most strongly to his serving it with the fish's glassy-eyed head swimming around in it, I was interrupted by the

clanging of the station bell. This was but a warning, but at its sound excitement increased. The guests all clamored for the waiter:

"*Carramba! Traiga cerveza!*"

"*Carramba! No tengo arroz! No tengo nada!*"

Presently a second warning sounded, and the engine commenced to puff. The waiter himself had been puffing for some time, as he tried to comply with sixty excited demands for food. Now he rushed frantically about to collect his bills, while the guests rushed frantically to catch their train.

Finally the bell rang for the third and last time. At this ultimatum some twenty passengers who had lingered upon the platform to receive the *felicidades* of friends outside made a concerted break for the steps of the car. Here they collided with some twenty friends from the outside who had entered the car to bid *felicidades* to passengers inside. During the confusion which ensued, the contending parties wished each other everything except *felicidades*.

It was most interesting to watch a *cholo* board the second-class coach. Since no Andean native leaves his home even for five minutes without carrying his few possessions with him, each *cholo* had a bundle on his back several times as bulky as his own shoulders, and after he had squeezed through a narrow opening between two other *cholos*, he invariably discovered that his bundle was tightly wedged between theirs. In the case of the women, instead of locking bundles, they

sometimes locked babies, and in the tug-of-war that followed, a witness could but wonder how the infants survived.

Above Matacana we struck more rugged mountain country. Even the cactus died out, and no vegetation remained to break the forlorn grandeur of the mountains which towered far above the narrow cliffs to which our track clung precariously. From Lima the road had followed the River Rimac. Now the river appeared as a tiny ribbon thousands of feet below us, white and foaming in swirling rapids or tumbling in sheer waterfalls for hundreds of feet.

We began to plunge through a succession of tunnels. In the construction of this marvel of railroad engineering, it was necessary to cut some sixty-five of them, through solid rock, totaling over five miles in length, also to build an equal number of bridges over seemingly bottomless ravines. From one of these bridges passengers on the rear platform could look down four hundred feet to where the rusted remains of an engine marked the spot where several American construction bosses lost their lives during the building of the road.

Occasionally the bleak mountain ravines opened out into valleys, with sides cut into terraces by the Incas, and an adobe town in the bottom—a motley town with mixed roofs of thatch and tin. At one of these towns, San Mateo, we began to see large herds of llamas, the burden-bearing animals of the Andes which writers have



described as possessing heads like a camel, wool like a sheep, and legs like a deer.

The llama is one of the few creatures that can survive the rigorous climate of the high altitudes, and its face seems to register great pride in the fact. Its camel-like countenance has a self-satisfied, sneering expression comparable only to the supercilious expression on a society woman's face when observing her neighbor in a last year's hat. The llama's countenance would be genuinely aristocratic except for the fact that the lower jaw wags continually as though chewing gum.

These animals are remarkably docile. They sometimes fight among themselves, but never attack a man. They seldom wander from the spot where their keeper leaves them, and one may see them in large herds, untied and unwatched, awaiting the return of their master. Yet they are sullen creatures with a habit of lying down and refusing to move when given a load which they consider too heavy, and upon rare occasions will spit at a driver, causing very irritating sores from the saliva, for llamas are natural sufferers from various skin and blood diseases.

The drivers of these herds are typical mountain *cholos*, dirty and barefooted, the men draped with a picturesque *poncho* made by cutting a neckslit in a square piece of woolen cloth, the women hidden behind voluminous skirts, now increased with the growing cold of the altitudes to ten or

twelve layers of gay petticoats. These Andean Indians, both male and female, were notably lacking in the splendid qualities which the reader of Prescott expects to find in the descendants of the Inca races. Filthy and forlorn-looking despite the gay costumes, they were both stolid and stupid, their eyes bleary with rum, and their cheeks distended with the ever-present chew of coca-leaves.

Nor were their homes in keeping with the Inca traditions of grandeur. The only habitations to be seen between villages were tiny hovels of stones patched with moss, with roofs so low that the owner and his family had to crawl inside as an animal might crawl into its den. The interior of these hovels, as I was later to discover, was as unprepossessing as the exterior. In one corner three stones constituted a fireplace, a chimneyless fireplace with only dried llama dung for fuel; in another corner a pile of frozen potatoes represented the family larder; upon the frosted mud floor a few half-tanned, stinking hides of the llama's deceased relatives constituted carpet and bed; other furnishings were lacking.

The gray masses of cloud which hovered above the bleak, cheerless landscape seemed strikingly in harmony with the people and their homes. It was a land of eternal gloom, inhabited by men and animals who both shared the same attitude toward life—men and animals that were sullen, docile, unimaginative, and unsentimental.

When, late in the afternoon, the train crawled

around a mountain cliff and emerged into a valley among the belching smoke-stacks of Casapalca, the first of the mining camps, where crushers roared and red-faced American bosses shouted orders to *cholo* laborers, I felt much as a traveler in the desert feels when he stumbles unexpectedly upon an oasis. There was an activity here and a throbbing of busy work that seemed out of place.

Above Casapalca the air became genuinely cold. There was a stinging in the nostrils from the rarefied atmosphere, accompanied by a feeling of dizziness in the head which increased to a pronounced headache as we approached Ticlio, the highest point on this highest of railways. Ticlio proved to be a bleak little tin station surrounded by snow-clad peaks barely discernible through a storm of hail. Just beyond the station loomed the vague form of Mount Meiggs, named after the famous American engineer who built the railway. This mountain was the real divide in the cordillera. In the tunnel which pierces it, the traveler reaches the highest point on the main line, at an altitude of 15,665 feet.

Here the *soroche*, or mountain sickness, became general among the passengers. The women brought out smelling salts and sniffed vigorously; while the men called for *pisco*, the native grape-brandy of Peru. The only genuine cure for this mountain sickness, however, is to let it wear off. With most people it lasts only two or three days, characterized by heavy pounding of

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the heart, pains in the head, and sleepless nights. Some escape it entirely. With others it lasts for weeks. During later days in the mining camp I met a woman whose only indication of it was a daily faint, from which she recovered in a few moments and felt nothing more until she fainted again on the following day. She fainted regularly every day for a month, after which she enjoyed excellent health.

I had never experienced sea-sickness, and had scorned the idea of having *soroche*, yet I did feel it at Ticlio, and continued to feel it long after we had passed the highest point and were gliding downhill again through moss-grown valleys to the American mining camp at Oroya.

At Oroya I changed to the mining corporation's own railroad, and traveled across the dreary *pampa* for several hours more. It was night when I descended amid a cloud of sulphurous smoke at the company's smelter, and the red glow of the furnaces looked like Pittsburgh.

Clark, a young man in khaki shirt, high leather leggings, and sombrero, who met me at the station, handed my suit-case to a *cholo* with the remark that I would find myself too weak to carry it. I resented the imputation, for although I had felt a trifle dizzy when passing the high point on the railroad, the quarters were only two hundred yards distant. But in the rarefied air of the high altitude, even walking proved to be hard work.

"A good night's rest will fix you up," he chuckled.

It is usually many nights before a newcomer becomes sufficiently acclimated to enjoy a night's rest. I found sleep impossible. For hours I could hear my heart pumping like a steam-hammer as it tried to function in the scant air of two miles above sea-level. Employees are seldom sent to "the hill" without a heart and lung test; nevertheless, it is not an infrequent occurrence for one to be rushed back to Lima on a special train, with a camp doctor pumping oxygen into him. Even old-timers, long after *soroche* has passed off, are unable to exert themselves vigorously, although the native-born Indians seem to gallop up or down hill, carrying tremendous loads on the back without effort.

In the morning I had been warned to take things easy, but after the lazy life I had so far seen in Latin America, I wanted to see people working. The auditor took me to the office. Although superintendents in these camps work harder than at home, owing to the difficulty of getting work out of their Indian subordinates, I discovered that office men have much the same habits as the Latins themselves.

"Do you need another man in here, Glen?" the auditor inquired.

A tall Canadian cashier, engaged in chatting with three other khaki-shirted gringos, looked up.

"Why, we have an even four for bridge now," he replied. "Of course, we can play poker instead—"

"Never mind. Poker would lower the tone of



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the office work. I'll ship him up to Morococha."

They all looked pityingly at me. Morococha was still higher up in the mountains, with a glacier in its back yard.

So I climbed on another train, rode back to the highest point on the main line of the railroad, and changed to a branch that led still higher into a land of Alpine beauty and Arctic temperature. After winding among icy peaks and chilly blue lakes, it came finally down upon another group of chimneys and mine towers, where another manager met me. The managers expect new employees to arrive sick up here, and are very considerate of newcomers.

"I'd take you to the quarters in my automobile," he explained, "but yesterday was pay-day, and I can't drive without running over the drunks."

As we walked down through the straggling native mud village toward the mines, *cholos* staggered stupidly out of our way, the more nearly sober ones raising their hats in salute, the rest staring at us in bleary-eyed impudence until pushed aside. Many of them lay in the road, half-buried in the mixture of mud and melting snow.

Before one of the many shafts that dotted the valley below, like entrances to a huge ant-hill, the manager paused.

"We'll take the subway to camp," he said.

The subway proved to be a mine cage, which shot us down into dripping blackness. Several



hundred feet below, in a cavern lighted by flickering miners' lamps, we climbed into a small electric car, and were carried noisily through winding tunnels where water trickled upon us from the rocks close overhead. The gringo camp where the American employees lived was some two miles distant, but in a few minutes we shot into brilliant sunshine among a group of neat white buildings.

Here the manager turned me over to a red-haired, freckle-faced man whom he addressed as "Paddy," Paddy looked at me distrustfully.

"It's not English ye are?" he inquired.

"No, I'm American."

"I'll give you a good room then."

I learned later that it was Paddy's dislike for what he termed "Lima-juicers," culminating in his posting about his home town in Cork some handbills warning them to take their feet off the neck of fair Ireland, that explained why he was now in Peru.

Paddy, whose present capacity in the mines was that of "General Welfare Manager," conducted me to the club, and left me there while he went out to find living quarters. To one who had come to the Andes in search of strange local color, the club was disappointingly civilized. Viewing its big easy-chairs, its piano and victrola, and its books and magazines, one could imagine himself back in some Y. M. C. A. in New York. Even the miners were a trifle disappointing.

I had expected to find a swaggering, quarrelsome crew of gunmen in these camps. Back at

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the smelter I had noticed that the two Smiths were identified by the titles "Forty-four Smith" and "Thirty-eight Smith" according to the caliber of the gun in the hip pocket. But these fellows, although husky and red-faced and otherwise filling all specifications, were quiet in manner, and spoke to each other with surprising courtesy.

Presently, however, when Paddy announced that my room was ready, it was with a grin and a warning:

"Look out for the other fellow in there—he's a bit ugly."

As I entered the door, an outburst of profanity from the occupant of one of the two beds gave hope that I had at last discovered a real mining-camp roughneck.

"My name's Foster," I said quickly.

I did not mention this with any expectation that the name would intimidate him. He seemed to be under the impression that I was the native room-boy, and I wanted to correct the mistake before he opened fire. His remarks, in English, promised that he was about to do something like that.

"My name's O'Grady," he snarled. "You've heard of me."

Unfortunately I had not. His close-cropped hair and bloodshot eyes were not familiar. I apologized for my ignorance, explaining that I had just reached the camp.

"But you've heard of Michael Francis O'Grady?"

"No."

"Don't you remember when he knocked out Kid Kelly?"

"No."

"I guess you ain't from Boston then. Wisht I was there now. I just got here meself, an' I'm down with this damned *soroche*."

## CHAPTER FIVE

### IN AN ANDEAN MINING CAMP

✕. ONE need not travel long in South America to realize that it is mainly a land for the big corporation. The riches of the southern continent are usually found not only in the distant interior, to which the corporation must build its own railroad, but also in the most unattractive part of the distant interior, in a region which taxes the company's ingenuity to make life livable for its employees.

Such a place was Morococha. It was quite the gloomiest place I had ever seen. Surrounded by cold-looking lakes, from which the frosted mountain-sides rose to white peaks without a single bush or tree to break the gruesome bleakness of the landscape, under a lead-gray sky that gave promise of a daily hail-storm, it was hard to believe that this was tropical South America.

The Cerro de Pasco Company's camps, however, were small modern cities. At Morococha proper, where the mines were situated, the robust gang bosses worked as they might have worked in Colorado. At Tuctu, the residential camp, we lived as comfortably as we might have lived in New York City.

The visitor to these out-of-the-way camps is

always surprised to find that the gringo colony not only lives and works as at home but even observes the same social distinctions. At many of the larger places, the gringos are even grouped in separate dining rooms according to their relative salaries, cleanliness in dress, and ability to refrain from swearing in the presence of ladies. At Morococha and Tuctu these distinctions were a trifle less sharply drawn, partly because of the smaller size of the gringo colony and partly because of the greater isolation of the camp, yet the distinctions were not entirely lacking. During the day manager and shift-boss alike might wear khaki and call each other by the first name, but in the evening they fell into their separate groups. The engineers and higher-paid employees, several of whom had their wives and families in camp, gave bridge parties and dances at which the men wore white collars and the women evening gowns, while the "roughnecks," as the lower-paid employees frankly called themselves, retired to the reading-room to play poker, or—still attired in the khaki working clothes—wandered up to the village to get drunk.

My status as an office man and my desire to secure material for writing both inclined me toward the "roughneck" class, but the fact that the camp victrola was broken and that I was the only man in camp that could rag the piano gave me the ready *entrée* into all groups.

The engineers of the upper strata were mostly contract men. The shift-bosses, gang bosses,

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and office men of the lower strata were mostly tropical tramps—a conglomerate mixture of Americans, Englishmen and Canadians, with a sprinkling of Scotch, Irish, Welsh, Swedes, Australians, and even one or two Germans. Also, a few higher-class Peruvians who were not too proud to accept employment were housed with the gringos, but they were not welcomed in the upper set, and having the Latin American aversion for men who do not carry canes or wear white collars, they refused to mingle with the lower set, and formed a group by themselves.

The tropical tramps of the roughneck division, disappointingly quiet from first impression, became more interesting upon closer acquaintance. Many of them were morose, silent men, who seldom spoke of their pasts, and to whom an inquiry regarding their reason for coming to the interior of South America would have proved an affront, but most of them had come merely to seek fortune and adventure and had remained to enjoy the easy life. All of them had tasted adventure in many quarters of the globe, but most of them lacked the imagination to know an adventure when they tasted it. A few of them were college graduates; the majority were uneducated save by travel; a few were illiterate.

To get the interesting tales of their experiences one had to dig. Even Judson, the little Texan who had assisted me in Lima and who presently arrived in Morococha, although he loved to tell me about his adventures, insisted upon being





THE "GRINGO" CAMP AT MOROCOCHA



ONE OF THE MINES AT MOROCOCHA



coaxed. When at dinner with me, he would remark suggestively, "This meat reminds me of ring-tailed Mexican spider monkey," after which he would wait patiently for me to ask, "When did you eat ring-tailed Mexican spider monkey?" After I had coaxed him for ten or fifteen minutes, he would start a series of reminiscences which would cover everything from a banquet with the sepia-colored president of a West Indian republic to a dog-roast with the savages of the Upper Orinoco. And when he had finished, as though realizing that he had been immodest in gratifying his love of story-telling, he would wave his hand in depreciation of himself and conclude, "But that was nothing."

Judson had killed three Mexican bandits in his time, although he was quite harmless in appearance, with washy blue eyes that squinted almost timidly through horn-rimmed glasses. "It wasn't any adventure," he explained, "it was darned hard work."

Another man with an interesting history was Bolshevik, a big Australian construction boss with Greenwich Village ideas about life. He had never been to school, but had educated himself to some extent while sailing before the mast, reading a peculiar mixture of Nietzsche, Shakespeare, Milton, Jack London, and Elinor Glyn.

Bolshevik was one of those born rebels who seize eagerly upon every radical theory they discover. He was ready at all times to argue about socialism, anarchism, spiritualism, pacifism, or

free love, and when he argued he would unconsciously assume the oratorical manner of the soap-box labor agitator. His voice would boom even though he had but one listener, and his fists would pound upon the table as though he were addressing a multitude. And when he shifted from advocating the electrocution of John D. Rockefeller to the more poetic subject of free love, the same voice would soften to a whisper, and he would murmur romantically: "One should mate as the birds mate in the spring."

Bolshevik, who had wandered about the world as a general trouble-maker, had been kicked out of several countries, and was proud of it.

"I once decided to make a record," he told me confidentially in the club-room. "I decided to become the first man who'd been kicked out of every country in the world. But I couldn't do it. After the war they began to create all them new states—Armenia, Georgia, Poland—and I couldn't keep up with them. If a man could only live two or three hundred years, he could really accomplish something in this world."

Yet even Bolshevik was quiet in Morococha. He had settled down to work efficiently and conscientiously as a construction boss. Once in a while he did insist upon rising and making speeches to us in the club, but these outbursts gradually subsided, for a new speaker had come to the camp. It was Michael Francis O'Grady, the ex-pug from Boston.

O'Grady's talks were entirely about himself.

Having recovered from his *soroche*, and laid in a stock of whiskey, O'Grady had undertaken to become the camp bully, and was paving the way by telling us of his prowess. As I came into the club-room in the evening, I could hear his voice raised in a recital of how he walked straight into the arena and stuck his head in the lion's mouth, or something of that sort. At first the others encouraged him with such comments as: "You, certainly are a son-of-a-gun," but as the tales grew longer and wilder, the applause became bored silence.

Offended at the lack of appreciation, O'Grady eventually confined his conversation to me. As his room-mate, I could not very well avoid him. He was an automobile mechanic, brought down on contract to repair several steam trucks which a former chauffeur, while intoxicated, had attempted to repair with an ax. When not describing his conquest of Boston he would favor me with detailed accounts of the various ailments of these steam trucks. Finally he did remedy one to such an extent that it sometimes reached the mines two miles away, although it was inclined to stop somewhere on the mountain roads to belch flame and make noises like the battle of Verdun.

The final perfecting of this car, however, gave O'Grady new troubles. The women of the camp, as is usual in most American colonies in South America, had nothing to do for amusement except to talk about each other, unless somebody's hus-

band provided new conversational material by falling down a shaft with a box of dynamite under his arm. As this happened very infrequently, they overworked the usual topic until no two of them would sit at the same table in the dining room. Now they seized upon O'Grady's steam truck as a means not only to visit the company store, but also to pass the afternoon in motoring up and down the mountain road to the mines,

As O'Grady was the type of youth who thinks that any woman who does not habitually slap him in the face must be encouraging him, he began to scent trouble from several husbands.

"Let 'em try it," he boasted to me. "These would-be hard guys'll find out how a certain little feller from Boston can use his mitts."

Nevertheless, he decided to refute scandal by showing his aversion to the ladies, which he did by backing his car off a cliff into the lake, nearly drowning three of them. Even the roughnecks were loud in their condemnation of this act, and it was remarked in the Club that O'Grady ought to be tarred and feathered. Only Bolshevik defended him, and this was merely because Bolshevik habitually sided with the minority.

"There ought not to be any wives up here, anyhow," he argued. "If them engineers would mate as the birds mate in the spring—"

My own daily routine was not so exciting as O'Grady's. One day was pretty much like another. At about 6 A. M., the clanging of a bell



awakened me, and with a shiver, I would climb into my heavy working clothes—even the office men dressed in corduroy and woolen—and would emerge from my comfortable, steam-heated room to join the other men at the “subway” entrance, where we congregated in a motley group, all of us silent and ill-tempered after the manner of men who pass from the comfortable to the uncomfortable.

Presently Franklin, the senior mine captain, growled “*Vamos!*” and our little mine car went rattling away, with three or four late risers dodging from their quarters and rushing wildly after us. The car swept around a shoulder of rock and plunged into the blackness of the tunnel. Huddled under our ponchos and rain-coats, we sped through the dark passage, with ice-water dripping upon us from the rocks above—rocks which barely missed our heads as we sped along. *Cholo* miners would suddenly appear out of the gloom, hugging the wall to avoid us, their flickering mine lamps throwing weird, fantastic shadows across our path. Sometimes in the distance could be heard the deep rumble of blasting powder, and our ear drums would throb with the pressure, while great clouds of stifling smoke would fill the passage. Then, finally, we would come to a stop in a huge underground cavern, where, still silent and grouchy, we awaited our turns to ascend in the “cage.”

At the surface we scattered in various directions, the gang foremen (who had breakfasted

back at Tuctu) heading for their respective mines, the office men (who had slept until the final moment and missed breakfast) climbing painfully up the hill through snow and slush to the company's other dining room, where a little Japanese waiter gave us hot coffee.

After our day's work, if the weather were unpleasant, as it usually was, we returned by the same route. But if the sun were shining, as it usually was not, we walked back to our quarters over a mountain road that led through the dirty native village, where every one stopped for a few drinks on the way.

"You need liquor up here," the miners always explained. "You've got to have it to stand the altitude."

As a matter of fact, there is no worse place in the world for drinking than in this altitude, but alcohol did make Morococha look more cheerful. By the time we reached Tuctu, our surroundings had brightened considerably, and the evening passed pleasantly, with all of us recovered from our morning's grouch and singing the popular songs of last year about the club piano or reading aged New York magazines before the open fire. Michael Francis O'Grady still continued to relate the thrilling tale of his victory over Kid Kelly back in dear old South Boston, but no one would listen to it any longer except myself, and I listened mainly because I recognized O'Grady as good copy for stories. But this listening won me O'Grady's sincerest devotion, and as an in-

dication of his good-will, he began to drive up in his motor truck every afternoon to the company office to take me home in style to the residential camp.

Since O'Grady had invariably stopped at the native village on his way up, and since the native village, with the exception of a few stores kept by Chinese merchants and a few brothels where dusky *chola* maids beckoned alike to the white man or Indian, consisted entirely of grog-shops, he arrived usually in the pink of condition, and the ride home was always pregnant with the possibilities of adventure. If a mongrel cur barked at us, O'Grady was quite apt to retaliate by pursuing the offending animal with his truck, turning abruptly into narrow side-streets or shooting off across the hills. If the *chola* maids, offended at our lack of interest, hurled an oath after us, O'Grady was quite likely to give his wheel a twist and send his truck crashing into the adobe front of their dwelling.

Because I would risk a ride with him—and I did so merely because, having been a mollicoddle during the earlier years of my life, I felt that I had to live down that circumspect past—O'Grady pronounced me the one "regular feller" in camp.

"I'm going to *make* you!" he exclaimed one evening. "I'm going to give you a letter to Bud Fisher, and he'll make a writer out of you. You know Bud—the feller that draws them funny pictures. I took him home one night when I was drivin' taxis in Boston. He'll remember me.

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Just tell him I'm the man that ran him off the bridge into the Charles River."

Thereupon he dictated the following letter:

"Dear Bud. The gink to who I'm giving this note is a regular scout. He can write like the devil. He knows all about them South American countries. Also them Central American countries. Also them North American countries. I know you're a good scout, so I want you to introduce this bird to Hearst and the other boys. Yours till — freezes. Michael Francis O'Grady."

As I had my doubts about O'Grady's influence in literary circles, I continued to pound out stories in my own way when my office duties permitted, and mailed them back to publishers, to receive only rejection slips in return.

The work in the company office was not arduous. Most of the office men were Latins, they all smoked incessantly at their labor, and were always ready to cease this labor when any excuse offered, as for example, when some engineer's wife passed our window in riding breeches, for no man of Spanish blood could possibly concentrate with such a vision in sight. The office, perched upon a hillside, gave us a remarkable view of the mine-dotted valleys below, of wooden towers, of tracks lined with ore cars, of huge piles of tailings, against which the diminutive *cholo* miners in their ponchos or oil-skins looked like tiny pigmies. The sound of activity—the creak of machinery, the puffing of engines, the shouts of the bosses—came to us in the steam-heated

office as from a great distance, almost as from another world.

There were two other gringos besides myself in the office—the American cashier, and a little cockney bookkeeper named Lansdowne. Lansdowne, who had served for four years with the British army, would spend most of his time with his chair tilted at a comfortable angle, while he grinned in my direction and sang ditties which he had composed about the American soldiers:

Oh, the Yanks are 'aving a bloody fine time,  
Drinking champagne be'ind the line."

Wherefore it behooved me as a former American soldier to cease my own work, tilt my own chair at a comfortable angle, and compose similar ditties about the British. Finally we would both postpone our work for another half hour while we translated our compositions into Spanish for the edification of the Peruvians.

Both of us, although possibly no more efficient than these Peruvians, were paid much higher salaries—our reward for being Anglo-Saxons in an Anglo-Saxon company. Even from the native laborers we received more consideration. If we went into the company store, in which crowds of *cholos* were always struggling to reach the counter, the Peruvian clerks would immediately cease serving our predecessors to wait upon us.

"That's why anybody who comes 'ere from 'ome stys 'ere," Lansdowne once remarked, and he expressed a very big truth. "It's not only an easy life, but demmit, you're a White Man!



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You may not be worth a damn at 'ome, but 'ere you're as 'igh as the King 'imself!"

Once a month, when we sent reports. to New York to inform the owners how many million dollars we had made for them, our typewriters clicked until late into the night. At other times we loafed, and waited for pay-day. Then a big steel car, guarded by a squad of Peruvian soldiers, rolled up to our front door, and for a day or two we sat at the window, with a revolver handy, and paid off the two thousand Indians who swarmed about the office. After that, there would be several days of idleness while they recovered from their debauch.

When sober, the Andean Indian is extremely docile. Descended from the ancient races dominated by the Incas, later kicked about by the still more domineering Spanish conquerors, he slinks about in a hangdog manner, always making room for a white man, to whom he raises his hat in an apologetic manner upon being addressed.

When drunk, however, the same Indian is apt to be ugly. His principal stimulant is a raw rum, called *chacta*, brought up in kegs by tinkling burro trains from the tropical valleys on the eastern slope of the mountains. It tastes like a mixture of molasses and alcohol, and instead of causing exhilaration, it merely makes the drinker ugly. Some two years ago, inspired by a revolution in the rest of Peru, the *cholos* went in a mob to the high cliffs overlooking the gringo camp, and hurled sticks of dynamite at their



American bosses below. Fortunately, they succeeded only in blowing the flagpole off the manager's house.

Drunkenness is general throughout the Andes, and the big companies prefer to let the natives concentrate their enjoyment of life in a once-a-month debauch rather than endure petty interruptions to the work at more frequent intervals. Ordinarily the men work quite consistently between pay-days.

Once, however, we had an interesting interruption in the visit of a gaunt, white-whiskered stranger who announced himself as St. Anthony, and preached the rapid coming of the millennium, which was to take place at 11 P. M. on the seventeenth of December. The *cholos*, all of them religious fanatics, immediately left the mines, and began parading the streets of the mud village, carrying lighted candles, and drinking themselves maudlin on *chacta* taken by force from the shops on the theory that with the destruction of the world the bar-keepers would lose their whole stock anyway.

The impostor went so far as to sell admission to heaven at the rate of one dollar for a reserved seat and fifty centavos for standing-room. Ordinarily the company controls such outbreaks through the local priests, to whom it pays regular "gratifications" for their support, as it does also to the local political authorities. The village priest, however, happened to be out of town. Finally, after much urging, the police raided the

impostor's meeting, and confiscating the box-office receipts, drove the prophet out of town. After that the police had a private booze-party of their own on the proceeds.

It is the unwritten law of the Andes that the White Man shall take no insolence from the Indians. Several times during my stay in the mining camp, I saw an American boss strike a native who did not leap to carry out his orders. This custom has been much criticized in Peruvian newspapers, which are always ready to comment on gringo "brutality." The bosses defended their conduct on the ground that the practice maintains the White Man's authority and makes him safe in a crowd of drunken natives that outnumber him by a hundred to one. An American who submits tamely to impudence from the *cholos* is apt to be run out of camp by his own fellow-countrymen as a menace to the prestige of the rest.

One must not leap to the conclusion that the big American companies exploit their labor. On the contrary, I found during many months in Peru that they pay higher wages and show much more consideration for the welfare of their native employees than do the Peruvian employers. The trouble is that the *cholo*, accustomed to his own way of living—usually in a hut of mud or stones patched with grass—resents any attempt to better his condition. Back at Oroya, where the company was constructing a smelter, it had established comfortable homes of

wood and corrugated iron for the Indians, but they preferred to live in caves or in hovels down in the bed of the river with the sewage of the American camp on the bank above tumbling upon their thatched roofs.

I later found that the camp which experienced the least trouble with its laborers was the oldest camp, Cerro de Pasco itself, which had solved the problem by leaving them alone. The mines here dated back to Pizarro, as did the old Spanish town where the natives lived. It has been called the highest and dirtiest city in the world. Here the company had permitted the Indians to squat on the chairless mud floor of their ancestral hovels and cook their scanty meal of frozen potatoes over their traditional fire of llama dung, and the Indians were contented. Altogether, the Cerro de Pasco Company employed about 10,000 native laborers, yet its growing mines could have used many more.

One of the greatest problems faced by companies of any size in the interior of Peru is a scarcity of labor. Labor is cheap enough, but scarce. Strikes give less trouble than at home, because the government usually settles them with a battalion of troops. But in the interior, particularly in the Andes, there are not enough natives to work. Indians down in the tropics, who can live by the simple process of digging up wild roots and spearing a fish, refuse to go up into the mountains to work for wages. No Indian will remain in the bleak altitude, except one who

is born there, and who supposes that the rest of the world is as gloomy and cold as his own home. Although every squaw in the Andes seems to have at least one baby strapped to her back, they are not being born fast enough to supply the growing American mines with labor.

The company's coal mine at Goyllarisquisga was having the most trouble. Goyllarisquisga was situated at the edge of the mountains, where a series of steep valleys fell away toward the tropics, and the laborers had discovered that just over the hill was a land of plenty where men can live upon the fruits of the soil, instead of playing with dynamite in dark tunnels. The manager of the mine was building modern homes for them, with electricity, running water, and real stoves; at the company restaurant he sold them meals at half the cost of the food; he even served coffee and rolls free to the men in the mines—but he could not keep enough laborers.

When, after spending three months in Morococha—and I had come to South America with the resolve never to spend more than three months in one place—I tendered my resignation, the management was not surprised. Most of the tramps employed in the Andes are wanderers, and drift continually from one camp to another.

Even those who come on a two-year contract not infrequently jump the agreement. It is not the company's fault. It pays good wages, and provides everything that one can desire except climate. But life among eternal snow and slush,

in an altitude where the least exertion leaves one gasping for breath, has little attraction except for the professional miner, who becomes accustomed to living in unattractive places.

Yet these isolated mining-camps are the only places I found in South America where the average young American can save money. He has no expenses here unless he drinks. Unfortunately, he usually does drink, and to excess. For that matter, the average American in Latin America shows a tendency toward the easy habits of the Latins, and with his greater Anglo-Saxon thoroughness is apt to go to greater extremes in these habits. Particularly is this true in the dismal surroundings of a mining-camp. And even if he holds himself in check while in the mountains, when he goes down to Lima for his twice-yearly vacation, after six months in the Andes, he goes all primed for a wild time.

My last day at Morococha was New Year's Day. On the evening before, we closed the office, and three of us strolled down to the native village, ostensibly to get a hair-cut in preparation for the evening's banquet. By the time we started on down the mountain road toward camp, the hair-cut had developed into a game to see who could walk nearest to the edge of the thousand-foot cliff without falling over. I was referee, being sober. It was a camp rule, enforced by all my companions, that on the day preceding a party, at which it would become my duty to bang the piano, I was to refrain from drinking.



Lansdowne, who was to defend his championship in the billiard tournament that night, and who always played his best when he could hardly stand upon his feet, led the way, improvising lustily:

“Oh, the president of Peru,  
'E didn't know what to do,  
So 'e went to the cupboard with old  
Mother Hubbard—”

Suddenly we heard a loud banging and clattering behind us, and O'Grady's steam truck came tearing around the bend. He was playing the same game.

“Bullfight!” he shouted. “*Cholos* having a bullfight outside of town. Let's go. All aboard for Boston!”

We climbed into the car and away we went. As O'Grady's special confidant, I always shared the seat of honor beside him.

“You'll get something to write about to-night, all right,” he promised me as we went into tail-spins and nose-dives over the hills. O'Grady scorned the road wherever it was possible to drive across the river-bed and up the mountain-side. “You know this guy Sumner? Well, he says I been insultin' his wife. I'm goin' to clean him up. You just keep your eyes on little Michael Francis O'Grady to-night.”

The bullfight was an amateur affair held in a temporary enclosure among a cluster of mud huts. As we arrived a number of drunken *cholos* were teasing a small he-calf, amid the shouts and



laughter of a crowd of other natives. We made a few uncomplimentary remarks about the national sport, and were starting to go, when we overheard something said by a Peruvian:

“The gringos ridicule our bullfight, but they themselves dare not face a bull.”

That settled it.

“We’ll pick up their old calf by the tail and throw it over the fence!” exclaimed some one indignantly, and we all leaped into the enclosure.

We carried out the promise literally, and had the satisfaction of watching half a dozen natives chase it with lassos across the hills, trying to recapture it. But we had not bargained on the big bull which they had in reserve, and when some *cholo* let him loose, we had met our match. Most of us were unsteady on the feet to start with, and this was no he-calf. We could not run, as did the natives, without lowering American reputation for courage.

O’Grady solved the problem.

A banging and clattering suddenly arose, and into the arena, straight through a mud fence, came a terrifying spectacle of belching flames—the steam-truck. The bull took one look at it, broke through the rails on the other side of the ring, and followed the calf.

The New Year’s Eve banquet passed off almost with decorum. Most of the roughnecks had been drinking, but in the presence of the ladies they held themselves in check. Some one did substitute a glass of catsup for O’Grady’s wine, but

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by this time he was ready to drink even that without noticing the difference.

Lansdowne insisted on rising with solemn face and reciting some verses that began, "It's an 'ell of a life, said the Queen of Spain," and which continued to give in detail the little secrets of her boudoir which made it such, but the rest of us drowned him out.

Afterwards I entered the club in time to see the last act of O'Grady's promised entertainment.

O'Grady was standing in the center of the room. Evidently he had been blustering, but now he looked frightened.

"I was only trying to scare you," he said, with a quaver in his usually confident voice. "My gun ain't loaded."

Sumner, a middle-aged man, who had lived for years in the mining-camps of Mexico and elsewhere, was facing him.

"My gun *is* loaded," he said quietly. "You probably think, because we old-timers are polite to each other and avoid quarrels, that we're afraid. We're not. We're polite because a quarrel with us may mean more than a fist-fight. In Mexico and the other places where I've been, we don't hit a man for saying what you said to my wife. We shoot him. I'll give you until tomorrow to leave this camp. Now get out of here, and stay out of my sight."

## CHAPTER. SIX

### AT THE PERUVIAN BULL RING

**I**N the garden of the Restaurant Estrasburgo in Lima, upon my return from the Andean mining camp, I ran suddenly into an athletic young man wearing a glorious green-and-yellow checked suit, a purple-striped shirt, and a blue necktie, who embraced me and patted me seven times on each shoulder blade.

It was Hernandez, my former companion in misery in the steerage of the *Montaro*.

"*Amigo mio!*" he cried, "*como le va?* Have you sold a story to the magazines?"

"Not yet, old top. Have you killed a bull?"

His face glowed with the pleasure of one who announces a coming triumph.

"Not yet, *amigo mio*, not yet, but to-morrow! To-morrow shall I kill the bull! With one thrust! Like that!"

He made a wild jab with his cane at some imaginary beast, just missing the eye of a surprised waiter. Hernandez was jubilant.

"All season have I been only a *peon*—a mere *banderillero*—but to-morrow, *amigo mio*, to-morrow I appear for the first time as a *matador*. To-morrow I kill the bull! In the *Plaza de Toros* shall you sit to-morrow to see me as a *matador!*

You shall write a story about it, and sell it, and then shall we both be successful men—we, who have scratched fleas together in the steerage!”

Most Latin-American countries have abolished the old Spanish national sport, but in Peru it still survives, and during the height of the season the leading matadors from Spain are imported at tremendous prices to display their skill. On the morrow, it happened, none of the experts would be present, and in their absence my friend was to be given his longed-for opportunity.

The morrow was Sunday, always the big day in the Spanish countries. Being unable to persuade any other American to accompany me to the bloody exhibition, I walked out alone through the narrow streets of the poorer neighborhoods, and crossed the Rimac by a quaint Moorish bridge of many narrow arches. Lima was as I had left it, yet to one who had spent three months in the Andes, it looked vastly better, and I could understand why the Peruvians, whose other cities are so unattractive, consider their capital so magnificent.

On the farther bank of the Rimac, I found the Bull Ring, or *Plaza de Toros*, a big circular arena surrounded by tiers of unpainted benches, the drabness of which matched the dull brown sand of the ring. In the height of the season society attends these events, but to-day the spectators were few in number, and mostly of the lower classes. In the section of the stand above the big doorway, a band was playing the march from Carmen, yet

even the musicians seemed to anticipate a very inferior entertainment, and played with little enthusiasm. The many little brown policemen who formed a cordon about the tier of seats, ready to suppress a revolution or any other disturbance which might occur, looked bored in advance, while the spectators, judging from their conversation, had come to this cheaper fight largely to amuse themselves by ridiculing the fighters.

After some delay a trumpet sounded. The big doors swung open, and into the arena marched Hernandez with two other budding matadors, resplendent in costumes of red and gold, followed by a troop of footmen and two beaver-hatted *picadores* on aged, trembling horses. In the rear were several negroes, leading the mules that were to drag out the fallen animals.

The procession trailed across the circular battlefield in bandy-legged glory—for some reason, bullfighters never seem to have straight legs—and having reached the presidential box, where to-day the usual gathering of notables was notably absent, broke up. The mules, with a snapping of whips and much shouting from the drivers, swept out of the arena in a cloud of dust, while the fighters scattered themselves about the sides of the ring, flaunting and tossing their cloaks in practice, much as a runner might limber his muscles before a race. None of them were first-class fighters—so my neighbors in the stand informed me—but merely the petty hangers-on of the ring: old men who had seen their best



days, or young men who had never seen any days at all.

Another trumpet sounded, and the door of the bull pen was thrown open to admit the first of six victims. It was an undersized, half-grown black bull. It emerged timidly, stared in a bewildered way at the roaring stands, surveyed with indecision the gaudy cloaks flaunted at it by the fighters, and then trotted aimlessly around the enclosing wall, seeking an exit, while the spectators rose in their wrath, and cried the Spanish equivalent of "Take him out!"

"Give us a bull!" they exclaimed. "We did not pay our money to see a calf! Is this a bull-fight?"

At the higher-priced fights a bull which refuses to show battle is immediately withdrawn, to be replaced by another. Evidently at this cheaper exhibition substitutes were lacking. The fighters themselves surveyed the victim with disgust, extended their arms in helpless gestures to the stands, to indicate that they were not to blame for the management's selection of animals, and proceeded unenthusiastically with the fight.

While the slaying of a powerful bull by a clever matador may be a thrilling spectacle, the butchery of a half-grown calf is disgusting, particularly to the Anglo-Saxon, who goes to the ring already prejudiced against the Spanish pastime. On this occasion the fighters chased the panic-stricken little beast about the arena. To drive the sword home according to Hoyle, the matador





THE ALCALDE OR MAYOR OF A VILLAGE



must catch the bull while it is charging upon him. Far from charging, this little creature would kick up its heels and run. They finally slew it, but only after a dozen misplaced thrusts had left it weakened and staggering.

Even the Peruvians were disgusted, but not at the cruelty so much as at the lack of a real thrill.

“Carramba! Is this a bullfight?” they demanded. “Give us a bull!”

With the entrance of the second victim, however, the spectacle improved. It was a huge black and white animal, and it charged into the ring with head high and eyes staring about for something on which to vent its rage. A purple cloak flaunted by some *banderillero*, attracted its attention, and with lowered head it charged furiously across the arena, driving the man to shelter behind the wooden *barrera*. Twice it butted heavily against the wall that screened him, while the multitude applauded, then it raced away after another cloak.

An aggressive bull like this one is the easiest to kill, for the rules of the fight were designed for just such animals. Each fight is divided into three parts. In the first part, the men tire the animal by leading it after their cloaks. In the second part, when the animal is becoming fatigued and ready to quit, they goad it on to new efforts by inserting tinselled darts behind its shoulders. And in the third part, when the beast is fatigued, the matador steps out with a silver rapier and slays it.

And this one proved an easy victim. It raced all over the ring, chasing every cloak waved at it, rushing always at the cloak instead of the man, wasting its strength in misguided effort. And when Hernandez stepped out with his sword, there was but a flash of steel and the brute fell, its heart pierced by the sharp blade. As the mules swept out with its carcass, tracing a big curved path in the sand, the spectators hurled their hats into the arena in tribute to the young fighter.

After all, the fighter is not to be blamed for this exhibition so much as the spectator who applauds him and calls for the cruelty. And the spectators, both men and women, demand cruelty. Once, when a later bull refused to fight and wandered about the edge of the arena, raising its snout toward the occupants of the boxes in a dumb appeal for mercy, I saw a beautiful and modishly gowned girl of sixteen lean from her compartment and strike it with her parasol, screaming "Coward!" On another occasion, when a particularly ferocious bull had tossed a horse into the air without goring it, I heard another pretty young woman exclaim regretfully:

"Oh, what a pity! The bull did not strike it with the horns!"

In this ugly phase of the "sport," the natives seemed to rejoice, and the fighters catered to their demands. It was seldom that a bull voluntarily attacked a horse. Usually the rider had to urge his blind-folded mount toward the bull, and

sometimes, when the horse drew back, several negro attendants would go behind it to push. Finally the bull, pricked by the long lance in the hand of the rider, would lower its head and charge. For a moment I was thrilled by the sight of a horse and rider tossed high into the air, but the thrill quickly evaporated as the wounded horse writhed upon the ground in agony. It was always an ancient creature, whose years of service had earned it the right to a happy old age. Yet, if it still had any life left after its first wounding, it was led outside, where the gaping rent was filled with sawdust and stitched with course twine. Then it was brought back to face the next bull.

The fifth victim again fell to Hernandez' lot. It was a gaunt, rangy creature with a tremendous spread of horn. More savage than any of its predecessors, it not only drove the nearest footmen to safety behind a *barrera*, but dashed all over the arena, trying even to reach the spectators.

At first the crowd cheered wildly. Then there was a pause. For the bull, as though gifted with sufficient intelligence to realize the futility of such behavior, stopped abruptly in the center of the ring and refused to continue. In vain the fighters flaunted their cloaks. At each flaunt the bull would lower its head, and paw the ground as though about to charge, yet instead of charging, it merely retreated.

This was a puzzling animal. Even I, unfamil-

iar with the game, could see that. Hernandez, however, with the recklessness of youth and the confidence born of his last success, stepped out undaunted to give an exhibition of dodging. With an air of carelessness unconcerned, he walked out and spread his cloak almost under the brute's nose. This time, the bull did rush. Hernandez, pirouetting gracefully without once stepping from his tracks, led it around and around him after the cloak while the brute's horns almost brushed his chest. Whatever I may have thought of his profession, I could not fail to admire Hernandez' nerve and skill. For at length, when the bull had again paused, nonplussed at its failure to hit anything, the youth knelt squarely before it, drew out a lace handkerchief, mopped his own perspiring brow, and then, to the vast amusement of the crowd, pretended to wipe the bull's forehead. Then he rose, and turning his back, strolled nonchalantly to the *barrera*.

The crowd applauded wildly. When the trumpet sounded for the placing of the barbed darts, Hernandez waived his assistants aside, and taking the tinselled things himself, again approached the bull. But this time the bull did not wait. Lowering its head, it charged furiously to meet him.

"No, no, no!" shrieked the spectators.

Absorbed in the conflict, as though each felt himself in the actor's shoes, they realized that this was not the moment to insert the *banderillas*. Hernandez should have waited until the bull's



head was lowered at the beginning of the charge. To lean over the horns when the animal was coming on at full speed was an impossibility.

But to the amazement of every one, Hernandez achieved the seemingly impossible. He was knocked flat by the bull, but the tinselled darts, perfectly placed, dangled from each shoulder of the raging beast. For an instant the brute stopped and shook itself to rid its shoulders of the stinging pain. It was this instant that saved Hernandez, and he came racing back to the *barrera* just ahead of the infuriated creature.

From this narrow escape he should have learned caution, but it was his first appearance as a matador, and he was no doubt eager to make a name for himself. Another man started out with two more darts but Hernandez waved him aside.

"I myself shall insert all four," he said.

The bull was again standing in the center of the arena, still trying to free itself of the goads, turning around and around, and snorting defiance to the cheering stands. As Hernandez approached, it backed away, suspicious of the vision in red and gold who could inflict such torture. And as the youth ran toward it, it suddenly adopted new tactics. Without moving from its tracks, it swung its huge spread of horns from side to side.

One horn caught Hernandez' sleeve, and a tinselled dart flew harmlessly into the air. The terror of failure must have blinded the young matador. He struck wildly with the other dart! An untimely laugh went up from the crowd!

For the dart struck the brute not in the shoulder, but in the eye!

Again it was chance that saved Hernandez. The bull, crazed by the new pain, made no attempt to turn upon him, but began to run around and around the enclosing wall, its bellow now a scream of agony, while the crowd continued to laugh. Hernandez was only bruised from his fall, but the blow to his Spanish pride must have been greater than any physical injury. His face was flaming red as he walked back to the *barrera* amid the taunts of his erstwhile admirers.

But when the trumpet sounded for the killing, he came out sword in hand, and went to the presidential box, to bow to the minor celebrities gathered there. Then he tossed his little black cap to a pretty *señorita* in the stand, and unfolding the scarlet cloak which marked him as a matador, he again faced the bull amid the taunts of the crowd.

“Everybody from the ring!” he cried to his assistants.

This was the crowning piece of bravado—ordering his companions from the field and facing the beast with no one to lead it aside in case of injury to himself. Hernandez was no coward, and the crowd’s jeers for his past failure turned once more to applause.

And once more, as he approached, the bull backed away. It was wary after its recent experience. Hernandez followed it around the

ring. Once it stopped and pawed the earth, but as the upraised rapier glistened in the sun, it turned and fled. Hernandez stood and shouted at it in disappointed rage; then he ran after it. Twice he almost cornered it, and again poised his weapon, but each time it turned aside and ran. Around and around the ring they traveled.

Once more the trumpet sounded. It meant that he had not slain the animal within the prescribed ten minutes. At its sound, Hernandez redoubled his pace. He probably knew that the trumpet would bring a storm of ridicule, and it did.

“Where’s the matador?” called a loud voice from the stands.

Suddenly the bull stopped and faced him. It turned so quickly that he had to sidestep to avoid its horns. The sidestep threw him off his balance, but he made a quick stab with his rapier. The blade struck the bull’s flank, far from the shoulder, and penetrating only an inch, fell out immediately. Hernandez dived for it, picked it up, and thrust again, but the bull had fled once more, and he missed it completely—missed it by fully four yards.

“Where’s the matador?” demanded the loud voice. “Who is this fellow? Who is this bungler?”

The trumpet sounded again.

“Give us a matador!”

The whole crowd was shouting it. The cry echoed back from the cathedral towers of the

whole city. The spectators had forgotten his courage. They were making no allowance for his inexperience.

“At what hour are we going to kill the bull?”

For the last time, the persecuted creature turned to face him. Its head was lowered, and its feet were planted for the charge. Hernandez tried to raise his sword, but the charge came too quickly. There was a shock of sudden collision—then in the dust a mass of red and gold was writhing under the horns of the brute!

The other men finally led the animal aside after their cloaks, and another fighter dispatched it. Hernandez was carried from the ring, a limp little figure, not seriously injured, but a very much disappointed young bullfighter.

As I left the arena by the back door, the dead victims were stripped of their hide, while several butchers were busily quartering them, preparing Lima's roast beef for the morrow.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### A NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENT ON MULEBACK

WHILE in Morococha I had written to the editor of the one American newspaper in Lima regarding a new job, and on Monday morning I called at his office.

It was a typical small newspaper establishment, piled to the ceiling with papers and photographs. Griffis, the editor, a young-looking man about seven feet high and one foot wide, sat at one desk in the traditional shirt-sleeves, with a pipe between his teeth. The reportorial and proof-reading staff, a wise-looking middle-aged Englishman, occupied the other.

“You offered me a position as special correspondent,” I reminded the editor.

He puffed thoughtfully at his pipe.

“Did I? All right. I can’t pay you much, but I’ll get you a lot of free graft in the form of passes, and you’ll be received everywhere as a guest, and can pry into everybody’s business. Do you want the job?”

I did. I had come to South America to see the country rather than to get rich, and this position would gain me *entrée* into all sorts of places

where an unofficial visitor might not have been received.

"Only it's understood," I specified, "that you send me where I haven't been before."

"All right. We'll start with the Chanchamayo Valley. No one's ever been there before—except Lloyd, and he's the only White Man in a thousand square miles of jungle. Go down and write something about him."

"What sort of a story shall I write?"

"Oh, anything at all. Tell how you found him in so much jungle."

The Chanchamayo Valley, he explained, was situated somewhere in the general direction of Brazil, and would be easily found because, after one had crossed the Andes, one had only to keep heading downhill.

So, armed with letters of introduction and one quart of whiskey—the latter being the official introduction to Lloyd and the ticket to his hospitality—I went back into the mountains to Oroya, and took an automobile to Tarma, a foothill city on the eastern slope of the Andes and the starting point of the Chanchamayo trail.

The automobile belonged to Turk, a robust little American mechanic who had come to Peru ten years before for the Cerro de Pasco Corporation, and who had later gone into the business for himself, transporting freight and passengers from Oroya to Tarma over a winding trail that zig-zagged precariously up the mountain sides and circled even more precariously about the edge of thousand-foot cliffs.

Turk's big car was a terror to the other traffic,



for the *cholos* of the region were quite unaccustomed to motor vehicles. The road was barely wide enough for the car, and when we suddenly swept around a shoulder of rock and came upon a llama train, the native herdsmen would desert their llamas to scramble for the cliff. Turk would stop with a fearful grinding of brakes, while the llamas would promptly turn around and go trotting back along the way they had just come, probably for two or three miles, before they found a place wide enough to pass us. Meanwhile, the *cholos*, emerging from their hasty refuge, would describe Turk under their breath in colorful language as the son of ten thousand unclean mothers.

Turk merely grinned good-naturedly. On the whole, he was of far more importance in this community, he said, than he would have been at home.

"Back in the States," he told me, I'd have been only one among thousands of automobile mechanics. Here I'm *the* one. And everybody knows me. Did you see that little brown devil I was shooting craps with in Oroya? Why, man, that was the mayor himself."

We sped down from the bleak altitudes of the Andes, past mountains cut into terraces after the old Inca fashion, and into valleys luxuriant with maguey cactus and towering eucalyptus trees. Occasionally we passed little *pueblos*, built against a hillside, the mud of the houses blending into the mud of the hill. Where a dwelling possessed a second story, it was reached from the outside by a crude ladder. The whole

effect was that of an ancient Babylonian city half unearthed.

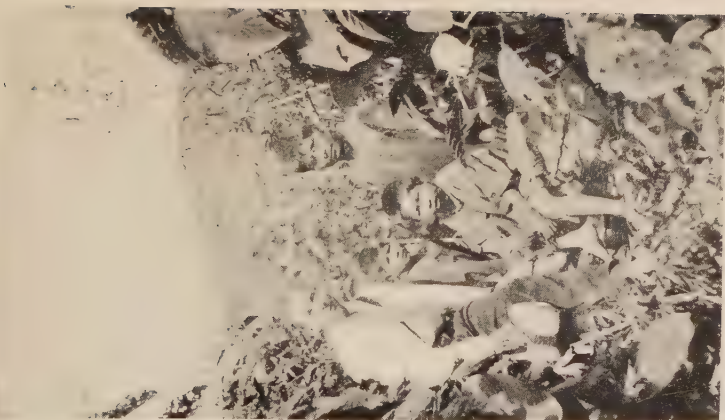
I had already seen Peru's barren seacoast and the bleak mountains of the Andes; now, on my way to the tropics of the interior, I had stumbled upon an intermediate country seldom covered in the books of travel. Tarma was situated in the foothills of the eastern slope, where the climate was that of eternal spring. There was something indescribably quaint and peaceful about the place, particularly about the narrow lanes on its outskirts,—winding lanes that twist out into the farming country. The roads were bordered with mud walls, topped by a row of maguey cactus, as effectual as broken glass or barbed wire, and above the walls rose double lines of tall, slim eucalyptus.

I spent most of the following day perched on one of the walls—on a spot where the cactus was absent—enjoying the peace, and unhurried calm of the place. *Cholos* passed me in little groups, driving sheep or llamas, or burros hidden beneath their loads. Men, women, or children paused courteously to touch their hats and bid me "*Buenos dias*," but the younger girls took one sidelong, suspicious glance at me, and edging to the farther wall, scurried hastily past in the ludicrous flat-footed gallop of their race.

The Andean woman is remarkably lacking in the coquetry found in most tropical people. With the exception of the few *cholitas* in mining-town brothels, the girl of the mountains shows no tendency to flirt with the white man or with the man of her own people. This, according to



THE CITY GATE AT TARMA



MYSELF WITH SOME OF THE  
CHUNCHOS



old times does not indicate a high standard of morality, but merely a lack of sentiment. Even between husband and wife—and the terms are broadly used, for the wedding ceremony is practically unknown among the lower classes—one sees no indication of affection. And toward the white man, ever since the days of Pizarro and his swashbuckling *conquistadores*, both men and women cherish only suspicion. Even the mongrel dogs which infest every Andean village will slink away at the white man's approach.

In Tarma, on the following day, I succeeded in hiring a rat-colored little mule which Turk, for humorous reasons which I later discovered, had already nicknamed "Flying Fannie." From all outward appearances, she was such an excellent little beast that I neglected to look under the saddle. That saddle, however, covered a multitude of sins, for the S. P. C. A. is not active in Peru, and the Peruvians show as much consideration for their dumb brutes as might be expected of the devotees of a sport like bullfighting. Perhaps it was because Fannie's back was so raw that her Peruvian owner rented her to me cheaply, charging only double the usual rate, which, considering that I was a gringo, was pretty fair.

Some exceptional riders, I learned in Tarma, could reach the Chanchamayo Valley in one day, but after I had been on the road for a few hours and had discovered the condition of Fannie's back, I decided to make it in not less than three. And by nightfall, the condition of my own back

convinced me that this was a wise decision. It seemed that Fannie and I lacked team-work. I rose up when she did, but she had a peculiar habit of coming down before I did and then rising up again to meet me half-way. It was apparent that one of us lacked a sense of rhythm.

For part of the journey, I had company—a party of four Peruvian *hacendados* on their way to sugar estates in the interior. Together we rode down the long cañon that led to the tropics, a cañon that grew deeper and wilder as we advanced, its seemingly straight cliffs lined with a profusion of vines. Above our heads the sky became clouded with thick white mist. Springs and waterfalls bordered the trail, crossing it to join a frothing river in the bottom of the ravine; the vines upon the cliff were wet and steaming; occasionally a brief shower drenched us.

“When do you have the dry season in the Chanchamayo?” I asked one of the *hacendados* in the party.

“This is the dry season,” he replied.

It illustrated the divergence of season in the different altitudes of Peru. Up in the Sierra, when I started, it was the dry season, which means that it only rains there once or twice a day. Later when I got down into the Chanchamayo country it really was the dry season there. But in the intermediate foothills it was raining continually.

From time to time we met *arrieros* with burro trains laden with casks of *chacta*, the raw rum



manufactured from the sugar cane in the tropics below. They were a beastly rum-sotted type of *cholo*, and although a few of them bade us "*Buenas tardes*," most of them stared stolidly and stupidly at us with bleary-eyed curiosity and passed on silently. If we spoke to them, they usually seized upon the opportunity to beg a cigarette.

Nightfall brought us to a place called Huacapistana, a small hotel alone in the cañon, where we found food and bed for ourselves and forage for the animals, and were lulled to sleep by the roar of the stream that swept past our window.

On the following morning we came to the real tropics. Our cañon opened out into a valley. Parasitic vines began to appear, climbing into the branches of the trees and hanging there like clusters of ropes. Even the highest mountains seemed covered with the thick, tropical growth. Travel became very difficult. In many places we came to washouts, the result of the recently ended "rainy" season, and were forced to make detours. Groups of Peruvian soldiers, little brown fellows recruited from the Indian classes, were here to repair the trail, but usually their officers were loafing in the shade of the palm trees, and the soldiers were not accomplishing much.

From time to time we encountered suspension bridges, each a layer of boards strung on a pair of cables across some raging stream. A sign at the beginning of each bridge warned travelers to dismount and lead their mules. Possibly the

bridges were secure enough, but they swayed up and down and from side to side as we crossed, like ships in a heavy gale.

Toward midday, the valley widened out still more, and we found ourselves passing through groves of banana trees, or fields of sugar cane with their pink tassels shining in the hot sun. Little green lizards scurried in and out among the hedges of maguey. Everywhere there was a hum of insect life. Butterflies of many brilliant colors and designs fluttered across our path. Along the road we passed huts of cane, with roofs of thatched palm. Many of them possessed no side walls—merely a roof supported at each corner. In the heat of this region no other protection was necessary.

Shortly after noon we reached San Ramon, with its white sandy street blazing in the hot sun, and its palm-thatched roofs scorching. This village consists of some thirty houses, all of cane and palm construction. Its inhabitants seldom venture from the shade during the sweltering midday, but sit back under their palm roofs and stare curiously at the funny gringo who passes through. Tropical fruits grew wild all around the village—*papayas* several times larger than the trunk of the tree that supported them, oranges of several varieties, limes and lemons. There were also many gourds that looked like a species of tree-climbing watermelon, which the natives dry, burn with carvings of funny designs, and sell to curio-collectors. There was no restaurant or



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THE FOLLOWING MORNING WE CAME TO THE REAL TROPICS



hotel in San Ramon, but one of the shop-keepers prepared us an elaborate meal, and although the surrounding country was full of delicious fresh fruit, he thought he would give us a special treat, so he opened a can of peaches. Everywhere in the Chanchamayo the people were so accustomed to their own delicious native products that they rated them lowly, and whenever they wished a real treat, would open some aged can of preserved stuff.

The Peruvian *hacendados* were leaving me here, but they gave me full directions for continuing my journey, and much useful advice:

“At La Merced to-night, you must look out for the cockroaches,” they warned me. “It would be well, señor, to ask the hotel proprietor for a frog to keep in your room.”

“A frog!” I demanded.

“Yes, señor—a frog to kill the cockroaches. Make the proprietor give you a good frog—one with good, springy muscles—one that can jump for them. And when the frog has killed all the cockroaches, señor, you ask the proprietor for a snake.”

“A snake?”

“Yes, señor, a snake to eat the frog. Then, señor, you climb out of bed and kill the snake, and there are no more cockroaches left to disturb you. *Hasta luego, señor.*”

Laughing at their little pleasantry, they rode away with a jingling of silver spurs and a waving of broad-brimmed sombreros.



La Merced was but an hour's ride beyond San Ramon—an agreeable ride along a sandy trail which meandered aimlessly through groves of banana trees. At La Merced I found fewer cockroaches than in the best hotel of Lima. Neither did I see the dreaded tropical mosquitos, and the net which hung over my bed proved quite unnecessary. It happened to be the very beginning of the dry season, and the streams had not yet dried up to leave stagnant pools wherein the insects might breed. Within a few weeks, I was told, the region would be swarming with the pests. And it was distinctly noticeable that the inhabitants of the little village were mostly gaunt and yellow with malaria.

At La Merced I made inquiries about the trail to Lloyd's place.

"Ah, yes," said the proprietor, "Meester Lloyd, he has a coffee plantation. When you come to the second bridge, turn to the left."

"Ah, no," said the proprietor's wife, "when you come to the first bridge, turn to the right."

"No indeed," said several malaria-marked hangers-on at the hotel's ramshackle bar, "when you come to the third bridge—"

Apparently no one in La Merced had ever been to Lloyd's place, or had ever known personally anybody else who had, but each was eager to hazard a guess as to where his place was located.

So I set out alone the next morning, trusting to luck that had always accompanied me on my wanderings. The road led out through wide fields of



sugar cane, crossed another swinging bridge, and narrowing down to a jungle trail, plunged into thick tropical forest where trailing vines formed an impenetrable wall on one side, and a cliff fell abruptly toward the Chanchamayo River on the other.

Once, on a sandy island in the river below, I passed an Indian fishing village. It was situated at a point where the river spread out over a wide bed of sand, dividing into a dozen shallow streams. These streams the natives had dammed with rocks, leaving just a narrow opening for the water, and guarding each opening with a peculiar little trap constructed from the odd boat-shaped seed-receptacle which grows upon the ivory palm. The Indians were genuine tropical Indians, much darker than the natives of the Andes, and dressed much more picturesquely, in a single one-piece brown garment that resembled an old-fashioned nightshirt. Their huts were but lean-tos of palm thatch, without walls—mere slanting roofs that touched the ground on one side and were supported by a pair of sticks on the other.

When I reached the second bridge, I had decided to cross it and turn to the left. There was a faint trace of a side trail here, a trail where the parasitic vines overhead made it necessary to dismount and lead the mule. At one point, where it skirted a cliff, it was so narrow as a result of recent rains that I could barely find a foothold. Flying Fannie followed me without complaint until we were half-way past this dangerous place;

then, woman-like, she refused to go any further. It was now quite impossible to retrace our steps, so with one foot on the ledge and one foot braced against the cliff, I engaged her in a tug of war. Below us, very far below us, the river thundered like the falls of Niagara. Had Fannie moved suddenly, I might have gone sailing out into space, but fortunately it was not Fannie's habit to do anything suddenly. And at length, she did advance, slowly and cautiously pausing on each projecting rock until I secured a new foothold and dragged her to the next.

We had pushed our way through the underbrush for about an hour, or rather, I had pushed my own way through and pulled Fannie after me, when we came out upon a tumbled-down building, where a little old man was carving ornaments from the native woods.

"Yes," he said, "this is the trail to Lloyd's, but don't go. You can't find the place."

"How about a guide?"

"Guide? Nobody but yourself has passed here in two weeks."

It was after midday and I accepted his invitation to have lunch. There was no food in the house, he said, but he would get some. Despite my objections, he perched himself on a tiny platform suspended from a cable, and pulled himself out across the foaming river, disappearing into the jungle on the other side. Somewhere across the river there was an *hacienda*, and he presently

reappeared with a basket of eggs and a bottle of *pisco*.

"Who are you?" I asked him.

He drew himself up proudly.

"I am the first white settler in the Chanchamayo."

Before I left the country I met three or four other old men, all of them penniless, but each proudly professing to be the first white settler in the Chanchamayo.

When the Peruvian Corporation first obtained a grant of half a million hectares in the jungle here in 1892, and brought out colonists to settle it, Indian troubles, and transportation difficulties, and other problems made the project a failure. Most of the colonists were Italians, who, instead of cultivating the land, spent their time gathering together to sing opera. Many of them are still in the region, but have given up agriculture, and like the little wood-worker I met, are earning a scanty living at something else.

"What do you do for amusement?" I asked him.

"I study," he said, and he showed me his astronomical text-books, and his dictionaries in English, French and other languages. In his youth he had been a schoolmaster in Italy. He was now past sixty, he said, but his soul was young. He considered English a very difficult language, but did not suppose that I personally was to blame for this. He could sing, "For he's

a jolly good fellow," and after we had finished the bottle of pisco, we both sang it together. When I asked the price of the dinner, he was somewhat offended, and said: "This is not a hotel, señor."

He walked out with me to indicate the trail. It zig-zagged straight up the side of a cliff behind his little cabin. As I was zig-zagging myself about that time, the trail suited me perfectly. Flying Fannie, however, objected to it, and we had another tug of war, which resulted in victory for Foster.

On the plateau above the cliff, the trail ran through a mass of high weeds. In the two weeks that had elapsed since the last man traveled this way, they had overgrown the entire path. Fannie solved the problem by eating away the jungle as we advanced. After she had munched her way for a mile or two we came to a place where we had to zig-zag down the cliff again. At the bottom the trail came out onto a riverbed and stopped. Having read how travelers, when lost, trusted to the intelligence of their horses, I let Fannie use her head some more. Her only desire seemed to be to eat more jungle. I left her while I explored both banks of the river for more trail. There was none. Evidently one was supposed to follow the riverbed, but it divided a little higher up into four more riverbeds, and each of these subdivided into four or five more.

"Well, Fannie," I said, "if nobody has passed



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ON THE CHANCHAMAYO TRAIL





this way for two weeks it's about time for somebody to come along. We'll wait."

Fannie was always agreeable to such a suggestion. It was one of her many sterling good qualities. No matter where I left her, or for how long, I could be sure of finding her in the same spot upon my return, wearing the same patiently miserable expression on her face. So I wandered off by myself, following a battalion of army ants through the jungle. The army ants are one of the real wonders of the jungle. A large, yellowish-red species of ant, they are organized exactly like a modern military machine, and even uniformed. The buck privates have red heads. The second lieutenants have small white heads. The higher officers have large white heads. These army ants, which are carnivorous and live only upon other insects, are welcomed everywhere in the Chanchamayo, for they clean up a hacienda of its other pest more thoroughly than the best bug-powder upon the market. I watched them in their march. They were in regular march formation, with the advance guard, main body and rear guard. Upon both sides they had flank patrols. When one of these patrols came upon a worm or insect, they leaped upon it like bulldogs, biting it savagely. One species of tiny brown ant they would not touch. Perhaps it had an odor or taste offensive to them. A type of silver-gray ant, however, seemed to be their particular enemy. Their advance guard served as sappers and engineers, bridging gaps by forming

a chain of their own bodies, upon which the main army might cross. When they struck any new problem, their officers would gather together in a group, touch antennæ as though saluting, and proceed to hold a council of war.

I observed all this very carefully, and having observed it, I came to the conclusion that pisco was certainly strong stuff. As a matter-of-fact, I have since learned by consulting scientific works that my observations were correct, but I could not believe it at the time. And while I stood there, marveling about the wonders of nature, as intensified by Peruvian grape brandy, my eye fell upon a print in the sand—a large, cat-like print, unmistakably the mark of a jaguar. And at the same moment I observed that the sun was rapidly going down, and I realized that I stood a fair chance of being lost in the jungle without food, gun, or mosquito net. These observations sobered me. Deciding to retrace my way to the home of the little Italian carpenter, I returned to Flying Fannie. And just then the miracle happened! Along came a *cholo* boy on his way to Lloyd's! And Lloyd's place was only half a mile distant from the spot where I had lost my way.

Lloyd himself saw us as we rode through the groves of coffee bushes which surrounded his cabin, and recognizing me as a fellow-gringo, came hurrying out to meet us, with a cheerful, "Hello, there, who the hell are you?"

Apparently there was nothing of the hermit about him, although he had deliberately chosen to

seclude himself in the woods. Nor was the quart of whiskey essential to the gaining of his goodwill and hospitality.

"You're welcome to stay as long as you wish," he exclaimed. "I haven't spoken English with any one for months."

I remained only one night, but enjoyed it thoroughly. Lloyd was one of those whimsical characters upon whom one stumbles occasionally in the tropics—a university graduate who has deliberately chosen to wander out into the jungle, build himself a home there, and let the world go on without him. He had scarcely been out of the wilderness for twenty years, had ridden but once in an automobile, had never seen an airplane, and was secretly rather proud that he had seen so little. Yet he had read carefully the books and magazines which occasionally reached him from friends in the outside world, and to my surprise I discovered that he knew far more about automobiles and airplanes than I did.

Lloyd was a character from the pages of fiction. A big raw-boned man, with golden hairs showing against the deep brown of his muscular arms, with a jaw like the rock of Gibraltar, he was true to type as an adventurer and wilderness-dweller, yet he still retained a culture and refinement that marked him as a gentleman. Upon his isolated coffee estate, he was lord and master. We dined upon the veranda of his cabin with half a dozen little Indian boys to wait upon us. Indian coffee-pickers came obsequiously to refer ques-

tions to him, and he disposed of them with the condescending fatherly air of a just but powerful potentate. If Turk, back at Tarma, could pride himself upon shooting crap with the mayor, Lloyd could pride himself upon the fact that there was no mayor within many leagues with whom he might deign to shoot crap. As we finished dinner, he turned to me with a smile:

“Do you think,” he asked, “that I’d go back to London and wear myself out working for a living?”

“Don’t you have to work here?” I inquired.

“Work? Why, man, look at that forest of orange trees. They grow wild. What oranges I don’t eat fall on the ground, and the hogs eat them, and I eat the hogs. I do ship out some coffee, but my creditors seize it so often that I’ve half a mind to quit doing that.”

Of the strange customs of the Chuncho Indians about his place, he knew much—how, when the moon and stars are shining, the Indians regard them as bad spirits, and get out their tomtoms of deerskin stretched across a hollow log to pound until the morning sun drives away these evil gods; how, when a member of the tribe is ill, the witch-doctors hide a piece of metal, send the children of the tribe to hunt it, and then kill the finder of it as being the one who harbors the bad spirit; how, although the marriage custom permits a chief to keep four or five wives, and permits the women to change husbands when they so desire, it still gives to the man the right to

kill his wife if he can catch her doing it. Late into the night, we sat on the veranda, while Lloyd talked and I listened, fascinated.

I spent the night on a burlap cot. Lloyd had no extra mosquito net, and the blanket which he lent me, I after learned, came at a sacrifice from his own bed. The estate, once almost palatial, was crumbling, and the plain board walls of his cabin threatened soon to fall. Yet I think Lloyd was perfectly happy and contented, for despite his dwindling finances, he was still lord and master over thousands of acres, a unique figure, a white Lord of the brown Indians.

In the morning he took me over his hacienda. All the curiosities of the vegetable kingdom grew wild there. There were rubber trees, from the bark of which when scratched by a penknife, there oozed a thick white paste that turned with age into the brown gummy rubber. There were ivory palms, from the hard black wood of which the Indians make their bows and the points of their arrows. There were achiote bushes weighted down with the red berries with which the Indians dye their faces. There were milk trees, the sweet sticky fluid of which the Indians drink as a beverage. Fruits grew wild—limes, lemons, oranges, paltas or alligator pears, guayabas, bread-fruit and others. There were yucca trees, the roots of which form the staple article of diet in the Amazonian country; also the turmeric plants whose roots furnish curry powder. For floral decoration there were orchids growing wild

in riotous profusion. Lloyd paused as we came back out of the jungle to his home.

“Why should I want to go back to civilization?” he asked.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### AMONG THE CHUNCHO INDIANS

**W**HEN I left Lloyd's place, I took a different trail, reasoning that no path could possibly be worse than the one by which I had arrived. And except for the fact that Fannie and I were forced to swim two or three small rivers, my reasoning was correct.

Having reached the main road, however, I did not turn toward civilization. Griffis had provided me with a letter of introduction to the manager of the Perené Colony, the largest group of coffee estates in Peru, and they were situated only a few hours' ride farther in the interior.

The road was most picturesque, following the Chanchamayo River, now a wide shallow stream that foamed over a rocky bed, bordered by a rank growth of wild cane and surrounded by a forest of palms and giant ferns. Once during the ride I encountered what I thought to be four Indian women. They were clothed in the flowing brown garment, resembling the old-fashioned night-shirt, which I had seen when passing a fishing village the day before.

One of them addressed me in a deep bass voice;

*"Tiene usted cigarros?"*

I produced a package of cigarettes, over which they fought greedily. Marveling that these Chuncha women were so advanced in their fads, I unslung my camera.

"I want a picture of you girls," I said in Spanish.

One of them grinned. The red and black designs painted on her cheeks spread into cubist figures, while she said something that sounded suspiciously like "Ha, ha, ha!"

"What the devil are you laughing at?" I demanded.

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" the Indian rasped. "We are not girls. We are men."

My mistake was natural. There is little to distinguish the male costume from the female among these Chunchos, for the loose-flowing garment effectually conceals the figure. It seems that in the man's robe, the neck opening runs longitudinally and in the woman's robe it runs latitudinally. Otherwise, their garments are alike. The man sometimes wears a circular crown of straw upon his head, topped by a parrot's feather. Both men and women wear long hair, black and greasy, and cut away only in front that it may not get into the eyes. Both paint their faces with red and black stripes or circles, according to individual taste.

Later upon the road I met several others. They all paused to stare at me, but their manner



THERE IS LITTLE TO DISTINGUISH THE MALE COSTUME  
FROM THE FEMALE AMONG THESE CHUNCHOS



seemed to express neither good-will nor bad—merely a frank, child-like curiosity.

Only one of them appeared dangerous. He was a short, sturdy little man—all of the Chunchos are short and stocky, but never fat—and as he approached along the trail, I could see that his right hand, which he kept behind his back, held a large knife. I did not like his looks, and not possessing a revolver or other weapon, I reached into my saddlebag and grasped one of the oranges with which Lloyd had provisioned me. These Chanchamayo oranges were the juiciest I had ever discovered, and remembering the combined breakfast and shower bath I had taken with one that morning, I figured that I could at least blind him with it, and possibly drown him. But evidently he had intended no violence, for he walked straight past without looking at me, still with the long knife held behind his back.

Finally I did meet some women. Most of them were homely creatures, with pudgy features and noses almost negroid in their flatness. Yet there was one who was rather pretty, brown of skin, but devoid of the usual paint, and with mischievous eyes. She was standing alone on the trail with two little children.

“Are these your little sisters?” I asked in Spanish.

She smiled piquantly.

“These are my little daughters,” she replied. She herself could not have been more than fif-

teen, but the Chuncha girls marry young. Frequently, I am told, they are wedded at the age of eight, before they are adolescent, to be guarded and supported by the husband until they are ready for wifehood. And, judging from circumstantial evidence, the husbands are not always so patient as they might be.

Eventually I reached a point on the river opposite the Perené Colony, and found a thatched hut from which a telephone connected with the manager's home. The bridge was six miles farther up the river, necessitating twelve miles more of travel, but the manager—a Peruvian, with the Peruvian's hospitality—promptly offered by telephone to send a boy around for my mule.

“You, señor, shall come across like a gentleman,” he insisted, “upon the swinging cage.”

The cage to which he referred was a small platform, swung on cables, and operated by another cable which wound upon a small windlass at the other side of the river. I made the first half of the journey successfully, for the cables sagged in the center, and the first half was downhill. But in the center, the cage stopped, for the second half was uphill, and the *cholo* on the farther bank was already tired from turning the windlass. Wherefore he left me in the center while he sat down to smoke a cigarette and think about it.

Under these circumstances, I found it exceedingly difficult to come across like a gentleman, as the manager had directed. The rapids below me made it impossible to dive off and swim, as I



was tempted to do. Also, and perhaps fortunately, the noise of these rapids made it impossible for the *cholo* to hear the views which I was forming regarding himself and his ancestry. Occasionally he did rise and try the windlass once more, but finding the work as hard as before, he would again sit down and smoke another cigarette. Eventually, however, another *cholo* happened to come along and together they pulled me across.

The Perené Colony consisted of some six big estates, owned by the Peruvian Corporation, a British concern which also operates the principal railroads in Peru, collects the guano along the coast, and runs various other enterprises. And Don Victor, the manager of the Colony, although a Peruvian, was quite an exception to the rule that higher-class Peruvians will not work. A short, stout man of middle-age, dressed in khaki and sombrero, he fairly radiated activity. He had just welcomed me, and fed me an excellent dinner, and was rushing me out by lantern light to see how the coffee was treated, when we stumbled upon a long procession of ants crossing the path. Don Victor stopped short.

*"Carramba! Hormigas!"*

Immediately he clapped his hands—the usual Latin-American method of summoning servants.

"Bug powder!" he shouted in Spanish.  
"Bring bug powder!"

A troop of *mozos* came running from all directions with cans of it. Don Victor seized a can of powder and the battle commenced. There were

millions of the ants, passing us in a line about two feet wide, those going one way being loaded with pieces of green leaf, the others coming back empty-handed for more. On hands and knees, sprinkling death before him, Don Victor followed the leaf-bearers until we found the home they were building. It was a huge mound of earth, some twenty or thirty feet square, containing about two dozen entrances, each a wide cavernous hole surrounded by freshly excavated sand. As fast as the servants brought fresh cans of powder, Don Victor poured it into the holes. When this was done to his satisfaction we started back along the line of ants to find the trees from which they were bringing the green leaves. Still on hands and knees he followed them across fields and pastures and gardens and into the woods, exterminating as he went. No matter how far we wallowed through the sand or crawled through fences, the long procession of insects continued. I began to think that the tree from which they were bringing the leaves must be some remarkably unique tree that they should travel so far to bring its verdure to their village. And finally, when we had wallowed through swamps and scratched ourselves on thorns for about a half-mile, we came upon the tree. It was only a mere bush, of a familiar species, of which we had passed several hundred exactly like it.

I am not a naturalist, and can not prove that this tree had no peculiar property which made it more suitable for the ants' purpose than the other

trees, but I have always felt hostile toward ants ever since the school readers held them up to me as models of industry, and I submit this incident to the reader as proof that while the ant may be industrious, he is ridiculously inefficient.

Don Victor also hated ants. After he had routed them, he brought a handful of insects back to his living room, and putting them under an inverted drinking glass, fed them bug powder, and watched them die. I might also submit this incident as proof that the Peruvians revel in cruelty, yet when one considers that planters in this ant-infested tropical country wage constant war against the insects, one can understand Don Victor's attitude.

Don Victor had another guest that night besides myself. It was a Franciscan monk, who had traveled all through the jungles from Colombia to Bolivia, and who had now ministered spiritually to the native workers in the Perené, traveling from hacienda to hacienda to say Mass and hear confession.

"Do these Chunchos accept Christianity readily?" I asked him.

He shrugged his shoulders—weak, thin little shoulders that set me to wondering how this frail skeleton of a man had ever withstood the hardships of travel in the unknown swamps of the Amazon.

"To some extent," he replied. "I tell them they must love one another, and they agree to that. I tell them they must believe in God, and

they agree to that. Then I tell them they must keep only one wife, and—”

He ended with another eloquent shrug of his narrow shoulders. Polygamy, while not universally practiced among the Chunchos, is considered legitimate by native custom. The Franciscan monks have persuaded the Indians of the region to wear clothing, which accounts for the brown frair-like robe worn by both sexes, but otherwise little change has been made in the customs of the Chunchos.

Pleased to find an interested and credulous listener, the *Padre* talked late into the night, as Lloyd had talked, telling me of the marriage ceremonies of the natives—how the groom breaks an earthen-ware jar upon the ground, and the bride, in evidence of her submission, gathers up the pieces. The little monk had many personal experiences to relate.

“Once, señor, in the Putumayo country, a chief introduced me to his ten wives. They were all seated upon the ground in a circle, and—” here he lowered his voice to a discreet whisper—“they were absolutely naked. You can imagine my embarrassment, señor, for I was at that time a very young man. But one grows blasé, señor, one grows blasé.”

Life at the Perené was pleasant and comfortable. Don Victor's home was a large building of cedar, screened to keep out mosquitos, lighted with electricity from his own plant, and furnished even to a victrola, for which he had the very best

operative records. A forest of orange trees, golden with fruit, surrounded the place, and about the front yard strutted numerous tame tropical birds of brilliant plumage.

I spent the following day riding about the several haciendas with Don Victor, and by riding hard for eight hours we succeeded in seeing a small part of the quarter million acres of jungle owned by the Peruvian corporation. Only a small part, or rather a comparatively small part, was cultivated, for here (as in the Andes) Peru suffers from a scarcity of labor. The trail would frequently bring us out upon wide fields of cotton with its yellow blossom, or broad patches of sugar cane with its shining pink tassels, or groves of coffee trees and bananas, but most of the time we rode through unbroken jungle.

Once, as we came out suddenly upon a little sandy stream, bordered by high thickets of wild cane, a troop of *peccaries*, or wild pigs, showed their tusks and then scampered noisily away.

Our trail mounted steeply, ascending high, thickly wooded hills. Occasionally through an opening in the trees we caught a birds'-eye view of mile after mile of trackless wilderness. And finally, when we came to the principal coffee hacienda, the coffee groves seemed to stretch away over just as much space.

The growing of coffee and its preparation for market is such a delicate and complicated operation that one wonders how it was ever discovered in the first place. Coffee bushes must have shade,



just a certain amount of shade, not too little or too much. Therefore they are grown with other trees, usually with bananas, but in the Chanchamayo with pacay-trees. The pacay is of no other commercial value, although its black seeds are used by the Indians for ornaments.

The coffee appears first as a red berry, containing two beans. Between the outside of the berry and the beans there is a layer of pulp, to be washed off, inside of which is a white parchment to be removed, and finally, when one gets down to the bean itself, there is still another layer known as the silver-skin to be taken off.

At various points among Don Victor's big groves were vats where the berries were shoveled around like so much sand, for Don Victor estimated that the coffee bushes numbered over a million, and that each bush gave a yearly crop of fourteen ounces. Most of the work was done by machinery. First the outer shell was removed; then the parchment berry was allowed to ferment for three days, after which it was washed for three days, and finally dried for three days. After that, it was sent back to the principal hacienda, put through the various other forms of rigmarole, sorted, sacked, and shipped over the long trail to Oroya by burro train.

Riding about among the coffee groves, we came upon occasional palm-thatched huts of the Chunchu laborers, consisting as a rule of nothing more than a roof supported by poles, and without side-walls. Don Victor informed me that many of the



higher chieftains had dwellings more palatial than his own, but I saw no such mansions. The huts I saw were merely shelters from the tropic rain, bare inside save possibly for a palm-leaf mat upon the floor, a few earthen-ware jars, and some bows or arrows.

I was surprised to learn that these Chunchos had known the cause of the malaria long before the white man discovered it. According to a very intelligent chief to whom I talked at one of the huts, the savages were not only aware that the fever was carried by a mosquito, but had identified the particular mosquito which carried it.

"That is why we first painted our arms and faces," the chief told me. "The mosquito can not bite through the paint."

I am a trifle inclined to doubt the statement, although Don Victor assured me earnestly that the Chunchos are much more intelligent than they look. Certainly the Chunchos, despite their many savage customs, are vastly superior as a race to the *cholos* of the Andes. Not merely are they better workers, but among them one finds none of the cowardly docility that one finds among the apologetic, hat-raising mixed-breeds of the Sierra.

On the following day, which happened to be Sunday, many of the Chunchos came in to the Company store dressed in their Sabbath finery. About their necks they wore hundreds of strings of black and white pacay seeds, fastened together in a design resembling the markings of a snake,

and to these necklaces some of them had attached dead birds of brilliant plumage, with the green of parrots predominating. Some carried bows and arrows, long, sharp pointed arrows for spearing fish, or rounded, knob-ended arrows for stunning birds.

Of the four hundred permanent workers on the haciendas, the majority were Chunchos of this type. In contracting for labor, Don Victor makes his arrangements through the chiefs, who, he says, are absolutely reliable and honest in all their dealings. On some occasions, where he needs the services of sixty or eighty men, their chief, as a personal favor, may request an advance of 200 soles (about \$100) or more, but invariably, when the time arrives for the men to appear, the sixty or eighty are on hand in full force. This was quite at variance with the experience of the Andean mining companies in hiring *cholos*. In the mountans, when a *cholo* agreed to work, he frequently demanded an advance on his first month's wages, but having spent the advance in the usual orgy of drunkenness, he seldom appeared for work.

During my entire trip to the Chanchamayo Valley, I never saw a Chuncho Indian intoxicated. This may have been due, however, to the policy of Don Victor in refusing to sell liquor to his employees. Twice a day each Indian laborer received a glass of pisco or chacta, enough to keep him happy, but not enough to make him drunk. This was regarded as part of his pay, in addition

to the daily wage of one sol and a half (about seventy cents in American money).

Having spent three days with Don Victor, I took my departure. The Chanchamayo Valley was the one really attractive region I had found in Peru, but I did not wish to impose upon the manager's hospitality. Miners from Cerro de Pasco and Oroya, I had been told, had frequently made the Perené Colony the objective of their twice-yearly vacation, and not long before my visit about a dozen of them had come down there, established themselves in Don Victor's house, and opening a crate of whiskey which they had brought with them, prepared for a pleasant two weeks. Don Victor, being a Peruvian and bound to the traditions of Peruvian hospitality, would not ask them to leave, but had cleverly fed them on rice and sardines three times a day until they decided of their own volition to move away. I had found his welcome most cordial, but I hesitated to prolong my visit unreasonably.

Remembering my former experience with the "cage," I rode away by the roundabout trail over the bridge, and was rewarded by meeting another of the numerous first-settler-in-the-Chanchamayo class. It was the bridge-keeper, another old Italian of the group whose operative proclivities had doomed the early Italian colony to failure as farmers. He lived in a thatched hut beside the bridge, with a Chuncha lady for a wife. His brother had married some other species of Indian, while his brother-in-law was wedded to a

third variety of squaw. The three women, each in a different picturesque costume, were all seated cross-legged under the thatched roof, making Indian beadwork. The bridge-tender eked out his slender salary by selling this work, along with arrows, monkey-skins and other curios.

Like the little carpenter, he took his lot philosophically and made no apologies for "going native." In fact, he introduced his half-cast progeny by saying to me in Spanish:

"Señor, let me present the evidence of a mis-spent life in the tropics."

On my way back to La Merced, I stopped for a few minutes at another hacienda to see the making of rum. The Perené Colony was the only hacienda in the valley which did not manufacture this "chacta," and I wanted to see the origin of the fiery beverage whose effects I had so often witnessed in the Andes.

It was a Peruvian-owned hacienda, a group of big wooden buildings surrounded by vast fields of sugar cane, and it was quite the busiest Peruvian-owned institution I ever saw in the country. Machinery roared inside the buildings, big modern trucks came racing up with loads of cane, crushers ground the cane to a pulp as fast as the trucks dumped it—even the thick molasses-like juice fermenting in the immense vats seemed to bubble enthusiastically, as though it knew that the natives all over the Andes were eagerly awaiting it. And at least ninety-nine out of every one hundred burros which I overtook and passed later upon the

trail were laden with the little odd-shaped casks of the potent beverage.

But what impressed me most at this chacta estate was the lack of consideration which the Peruvian owner showed for the employees. One huge, barn-like wooden structure housed over a hundred laborers. It was shabby and filthy. Sometimes an old piece of burlap was stretched between families; sometimes even this was lacking. There was nothing suggesting furniture—only rough wooden bunks, like the steerage berths in a ship, where men, women, and children slept. There were no screens for protection against mosquitos, and I could understand at a glance why the *cholos* were so yellow and pallid with malaria.

“How do you ever keep men here?” I asked one of the bosses.

And indiscreetly he revealed the method:

“We keep them in debt to the company store, señor. Thus, according to the law, they are not permitted to leave.”

I do not claim that these conditions are typical of the whole of Peru, but I believe that they are fairly general, not only in Peru, but in most other Latin-American countries. Since the first coming of the Spaniard, the Indian has been exploited alike by government, church, and employer, until he has grown distrustful of all white men. It explains why the *cholo* of the mining camps, when the American companies attempt to house him in modern dwellings, makes every



possible effort to avoid being "uplifted." He has an inbred suspicion that there is something sinister behind the kindly-seeming efforts of his benefactors.

Yet, when a traveling American remarks about exploitation to a Latin American there is always a ready answer for him. I received the same answer from several Peruvians:

"But what happened in your own United States, señor? If you did not exploit your Indians you have killed most of them in warfare, driven them from their lands, practically exterminated the race!"

Continuing my journey toward La Merced, I again encountered the little Italian carpenter, hiking on foot along the road with a stick over his shoulder, and a bag on the end of the stick. He had just tramped six leagues through the jungle to sell a few of his little wooden ornaments, and was returning with several more bottles of pisco to relieve the tedium of his celibate life.

"*Buenos dias, señor,*" he cried. "Again you shall be my guest for lunch. Again shall we drink and sing together."

Remembering the effects of our last party, I tried to make excuses. Acceptance of his scanty fare seemed to be an imposition. But he was insistent.

"If the señor shall not drink pisco, he shall drink lemonade. When I have an opportunity to entertain a guest but once in six months, would you refuse me?"



We turned off into the narrow trail to his shop, and had lunch together. Again he declined indignantly to accept payment. When I tried to buy some of the ornaments he had made, he begged me to accept them as a gift.

“No one ever comes to my cabin, señor. When I have the opportunity to make a gift but once in six months, would you refuse me?”

He consumed large quantities of the pisco, and grew loquacious. Years ago, he said, he had been happy here with a wife and child, but both had died of the fever. Would I accompany him to their graves to weep with him? When he had the opportunity to weep with a friend but once in six months, would I deny him the pleasure? He was both amusing and pathetic, for while he spoke of his loneliness with an air of jest, I could see that he felt it most keenly.

After we had wept together over the graves, we came back to his isolated shop, where he insisted that I again mount the table with him to sing once more, “For he’s a Jolly Good Fellow.” Since he had the opportunity to do this but once every six months, I could not refuse. And as I led Fannie back through the tunnel of vegetation, he stood there beside his rapidly decaying home,—a lonely, kind-hearted old man, waving a friendly farewell with his empty bottle.

The Chanchamayo Valley had proved a veritable paradise behind the mountains, but its riches, like the riches of the Andes, were for the big corporation, the corporation which could build

roads through the untraveled wilderness of the interior. The individuals who had gone into the region to make their fortune as colonists, like the little Italian carpenter, had found their problems too great, and retiring to their isolated homes, were allowing the outside world to get along without them.

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE BURNING OF PAITA

**D**ESPITE my resolution not to remain at any job for more than three months, I traveled for *The West Coast Leader* for a much longer period.

Possibly the indolence of the tropics had captured me, as it captures most world wanderers. As a newspaper job, mine was a sinecure. There were no instructions from the desk, and no worries about getting telegraph connections in time to catch the next edition. The *Leader* was published but once a week. It came out promptly every Wednesday afternoon at 2 P. M., or 3 P. M., or 4 P. M., or the following morning, or the following afternoon, or the following week, or as soon as Griffis could persuade the local Peruvian printers to get busy and print it.

Griffis, who was primarily the local correspondent for the Associated Press, ran his weekly only as a side-line, and since he was the best known and probably the best liked man in the Anglo-Saxon colony, his office had become a gathering place for the other Americans and Englishmen, who continually dropped in to "chew the rag," and whose sociability further delayed the publication of the *Leader*.

Also, except for the several columns of travelogue that I turned out each week, Griffis wrote the whole paper himself, solicited all the advertising, handled most of the subscriptions, and even read most of the proof, yet he managed to turn out a very newsy little periodical. The wise-looking middle-aged Englishman who nominally constituted the proof-reading staff was a remittance man—one of those Englishmen who receive a regular allowance from the family estate at home, and he condescended to read occasional copy mainly because he had to do something to keep himself occupied. Griffis welcomed him because his dignity, enhanced by a gold-headed cane, lent a certain elegance to the office.

Griffis never seemed to care much what I wrote, provided I turned out something interesting, and so I rambled about at will, occasionally wandering into regions like the Chanchamayo, but usually visiting the big Anglo-Saxon concerns with which Peru was on the boom. Practically all the large projects in the republic were in the hands of Anglo-Saxons. The Peruvian of the upper caste is neither a worker nor an organizer, and welcomes the foreign promoter. At the time of my visit all the principal mines of the Andes were in the hands of the Cerro de Pasco Corporation or other American concerns. The British-controlled "Peruvian Corporation" ran the railroads, and the leading coffee plantations, harvested the deposits of guano along the coast, and even collected the taxes for the government. An

American sanitary commission was cleaning up the ports. The oil fields were in the hands of American, British, and Italian concerns. Another American company had just been awarded a contract to rebuild and pave the thirty principal cities. The largest irrigation project was run by Americans. The whole economic structure of Peru centered about foreign capitalists.

Usually Griffis provided me with passes and letters of introduction for my trips, but when his many other duties kept him from thinking of such things, I managed to introduce myself and was usually received with open hospitality wherever I went, both from the American superintendents and from Peruvians en route—a hospitality which could scarcely be duplicated outside Latin America.

Occasionally, of course, I did get into trouble, but only with other Americans, and usually through my own fault. Once in an article I described the miners at Oroya as “the lowest-down gang of beachcombers in Peru,” whereupon they announced that if they ever caught the *Leader* correspondent again, they would tar and feather him. In private Griffis bawled me out for my rashness, which had by accident escaped his editorial blue pencil; in public he stood by me, warning the irate Oroyans that if they ever touched a member of his staff, he would buy the reddest ink he could find, and would insult them with it in his largest type on the front page of every issue from then until doomsday.

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On another occasion, in describing a village which was notable mainly for the fact that it contained a bar-room in which one adventurer had licked thirty-two natives, including four policeman and a squad of Peruvian soldiers, all with no other weapon than a billiard cue, I referred to the stalwart adventurer as an "unknown Swede." In reality he was a Scotchman and quite a famous character on the West Coast, but I thought that by concealing his identity, I would be conferring a favor upon him. It happened, however, that he was exceedingly proud of his achievement, and he so resented both the "unknown" and the "Swede" that he took his favorite billiard cue and started out looking for me.

With the Peruvians themselves I got along famously. Having enough sense of humor to join them in the embracing and back-slapping and the expressions of eternal friendship and admiration which are almost a religion to the Latin Americans, I found them, on the whole, a most likable people. Sometimes, when after a hard trip, I arrived at my destination in shabby clothing, they regarded me with a faint hostility until I had donned a white collar—the infallible mark of the gentleman, according to Latin-American standards, but then, according to their exaggerated politeness, the entire house was put at my disposal; in fact, the house with all its contents was tendered me as a gift. Other Anglo-Saxons whom I met on my travels frequently laughed at this exaggerated politeness.



“They know you won’t accept the gift, or they wouldn’t make it,” some of my fellow Americans remarked from time to time. “These Peruvians are altogether superficial. Even their hospitality, while genuine, springs from their love of display. They don’t do it because they like you so much, they just like to make an impression. It tickles their vanity to consider themselves wonderful hosts, dispensing *largesse* to the traveler,”

Personally, without worrying about the motive which prompted the hospitality, I found it hearty and seemingly genuine, and far surpassing anything a foreigner could expect to receive in our own country. Yet, having observed the Peruvian’s disdain of men who do not display fine clothes, I suspect that had I traveled around Peru on foot, with only the limited wardrobe with which I landed in Peru, as Harry Franck did in his story of “Vagabonding Down the Andes,” I should have received the same inhospitable treatment accorded to him, and should have left Peru with the same bitter impressions which he carried away. But traveling in fairly good style, I found the warmest hospitality whatever its underlying motive of personal display.

I shall not attempt to describe all my visits to the big Anglo-Saxon mining camps and construction camps; they were all somewhat alike, and they interested me mainly because of the opportunity they offered for me to study the relations between Latins and Anglo-Saxons. And I soon learned that while the Peruvians welcome

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Americans to their shores, and while Americans come there eagerly and remain there, and each praises the other at the top of his voice, the majority of them have no very deep fondness for the other.

I met very few Americans in Peru who did not, in confidential moments, have something uncomplimentary to say about the Peruvians.

"They're a thieving lot," one man said. "You can't do a thing without bribing officials. You can't send money in a letter without its being opened. You can't get goods into port without having stevedores break it open to see whether it's worth stealing. You can't add up your restaurant bill without finding that the waiter's made a mistake in his own favor. These people have the same instincts as Mexican bandits, only they haven't the nerve to come out openly and shoot you, so they pick your pocket."

"They're a worthless lot," said another. "They sit back and let us develop the country and pay their taxes for them, while they strut around with their canes and make goo-goo eyes at servant girls."

Most of the men who made these criticisms had enough good sense to hide their feelings when in the presence of Peruvians, but there were always a few Americans—usually the poorest specimens of Americans—who did not hesitate at any time to voice their feelings aloud. There is a certain type of traveler who habitually criticizes the trains, the hotels, the meals, the national customs,

and to show the Latin the error of his ways, points out how much better everything is in the United States, which may be the truth, but to the Peruvian is a decidedly unpleasant truth.

Latin Americans regard politeness as much more essential than truth. They live upon flattery. Two mere acquaintances, meeting upon the street, will stop to embrace each other and assure each other in the most flowery language of their mutual affection. It is not merely pretense; they are so accustomed to do this that they do it spontaneously. In their Latin impulsiveness, I think they both for the moment believe what they tell each other. At a dinner—and nearly every evening at the restaurant where I dined when in Lima there was a formal banquet tendered by a group of white-collared middle-class aristocrats to one of their number—the speakers would dwell upon the scholarly habits and unimpeachable morals and business acumen and patriotic devotion and various other good qualities of the guest of honor, all in the most ridiculously flowery language, and the much praised guest of honor, although usually an undersized and flabby-faced specimen whose appearance made the tributes more ridiculous, would sit there and beam upon the speakers, both he and they believing every word spoken. Naturally, when a Peruvian hears the truth about himself, even when it is not a terribly offensive truth, the very surprise of such discourtesy strikes him as an insult.

Outwardly the Peruvian loves us. Individually

any American who treats him politely, and accepts the local customs diplomatically, receives a hearty welcome to Peru. I met Americans in the republic who, having learned to embrace the Peruvians and flatter them in the beloved manner, could get away with murder. I mean this literally. I know of one American who, upon finding a *cholo* beating a child with a belt-buckle, gave the *cholo* such a thrashing that the man died; the local officials, to whom this American had always been courteous and over whom he had always made a fuss, instead of trying him for murder, as they might eagerly have done in the case of many Americans, decided after a casual investigation that the *cholo* had died from "natural causes."

"That," said this American, "was because I never call my neighbors spigs; because I live as they do and accept their ways with patience."

Collectively, however, we are all "gringos," and until we individually earn the native's goodwill, he dislikes us. Under all his protestations of friendship, he has a slumbering antagonism to us. Inwardly he treasures up the insults his country receives from the occasional indiscreet American, and charges them against all of us. Even while he invites us to develop his country, he can not help feeling a trifle jealous of us, and resentful of our business-like ways.

Consequently when an American business man comes to Peru, expecting to accomplish things

with a rush, as he might accomplish them at home, he finds many annoying obstacles to overcome. My observations on one particular trip, although I do not attempt to pose as an authority on business problems, may give some insight into a few of these obstacles.

It was a trip to the oil port of Talara, situated on the barren coast just north of Paita. I sailed on the petroleum company's tank steamer, incidentally with a British captain who sat out under the deck awning with me and aired his firm belief in the superiority of all things British to all things American.

A tropical sun had been pouring down upon our deck awning with ever-growing intensity as we steamed northward toward the equator, and when we dropped anchor in Talara Bay, the heat was at its worst. The placid blue water of the harbor glistened like the surface of a highly polished mirror. The gray stucco walls of the petroleum city sparkled blindingly. And beyond, the vast expanse of desert coast, dotted with hundreds of little wooden oil derricks, glittered under the relentless blaze of light, reflecting it and intensifying it to a veritable sheet of flame.

This first glimpse of the oil port confirmed my earlier observation that the riches of South America seem always to be found either in the most unattractive or most inaccessible places. And here at Talara, as well as in the adjacent oil fields, the big petroleum companies had overcome



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natural obstacles quite as great as those overcome by the mining companies.

A few years previous to my visit, Talara had been but a fishing village upon a parched, rainless coast. Over on one side of the harbor the original village still remained, in marked contrast to the new city that had grown up. The original village was but a ramshackle cluster of patched hovels, built from driftwood gathered by fishermen along the beach. Its sandy streets were paved with filth and garbage, and upon this loathsome mess pigs and naked brown children seemed battling for supremacy. The odor of the place was clearly perceptible to us upon the ship half a mile distant.

On the other side of the harbor, clear, neat, and uniform rose the stucco buildings of the new American-built oil city, lined with cement sidewalks. Below them, at the harbor's edge, were the largest and best-equipped docks in Peru. A tank steamer rested against the wharf; several oil-burning freighters lay at anchor nearby, awaiting their turn to take on fuel. Where there had once been nothing but barren desert, there had arisen a thriving city and a well-ordered port. The big petroleum companies had brought fresh water down from the distant foothills of the interior, had constructed miles of narrow-gauge railway to connect the harbor with the various oil camps, had erected homes, clubs, even a swimming pool and tennis courts—in short, had done everything possible to make life attractive for its



employees except to provide rain and vegetation.

And this was impossible. There had been a brief shower here some five years before my visit, but such an occurrence was quite unusual, and the natives of the fishing village were still discussing the phenomenon. A few miles inland, the desert was covered by a scraggling growth of thorn-bushes, but here on the coast there was not so much as a single cactus, nothing but the sun-blistered expanse of sand, seamed and parched, the "bad lands" at their very worst.

The American employees, numbering nearly a hundred, were making the best of it, like the employees of the mining camps, living much the same club life, while their wives indulged in the same tea-parties and petty squabbles. Yet on the whole, they were not so interesting as the miners of the Andes. Mostly contract men, they led a prosaic life, and had no adventures to relate. Riotous booze-fights, such as had enlivened Morococha, were less in evidence, and although the piano in the Talara Club was badly out of tune from a custom among the younger bachelors of pouring beer into it—a custom resulting from their exuberant state of sociability, which they wished to share with the piano—even this unconventional little ceremony could hardly be described as exciting. The native laborers also lacked the picturesqueness of the Andean natives, dressing in commonplace, colorless overalls instead of vivid-hued ponchos. In their features negro blood seemed to be well mixed with

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the Indian. Like the *cholos* of the Sierra, they half resented the efforts of the American company to house them in clean, sanitary dwellings, most of them showing a marked preference for their own native fishing village across the bay.

When my British captain was ready to sail, I was quite ready to accompany him, but Fate, in the form of a Peruvian health official, intervened. Talara, although the cleanest and most healthful port in Peru (except for its fishing village), was situated between the fever-stricken Ecuadorean port of Guayaquil and the equally infamous native port of Paita, and when an epidemic of plague and fever broke out simultaneously in these two cities, the Peruvian health officer quarantined the whole north coast by cable. Passengers from Talara, he ruled, would not be received in Lima.

One of the officials of the petroleum company was wrathful.

"We've come down here and built up the cleanest and best port on the coast for them, and then they classify us with their own dirty ports."

One of the sub-managers offered a suggestion:

"That health official's just holding us up for graft. Collectively, the Peruvians are glad to have us come down, but individually most of them are ready to soak us at every opportunity. That doctor's holding us up because we're gringos and because we haven't greased his palm yet."

The manager solved my problem by sending me in his own launch to Paita. Although the

Peruvian port of Paita was reeking with yellow fever and bubonic plague, the regular passenger steamers still called here, and voyagers, by securing some certificate of health from the local doctors, were allowed to sail for Lima.

I did not at first welcome this detour. Paita, although an outlet for rich cotton valleys in the interior and one of Peru's busiest ports, was but a city of cane dwellings plastered with mud, situated on the desert beach beneath the same blazing sun that beat upon Talara, and at first glance—or first smell—the city was hardly more prepossessing than the fishing village. Also, as I landed from the manager's launch and headed toward the ramshackle hotel, I passed three separate funeral processions, carrying the bodies of plague victims to the cemetery.

An American sanitary commission, imported by the Peruvian government from the Canal Zone, had just arrived to clean up the city. Dr. Henry Hanson, the leader of the commission, was finding it a difficult job. In an effort to eradicate the fever, he had divided the city into districts, and sent out local officials to inspect water-barrels and other breeding places of the fever-carrying mosquito, but the officials had performed their duty in the usual easy-going, careless way of Latin-American officialdom, and the people paid no attention to their orders.

Meanwhile the plague epidemic had also been growing. The ramshackle houses of the city were full of rats, which in turn were full of fleas, which

also in turn were full of bubonic plague and always ready to share it with the populace. Dr. Hanson had finally decided that the only thing to do was to burn the town and had obtained authority from President Leguia to do so. The Lima government had promised to replace the burned dwellings with more sanitary homes, but the natives of Paita, distrustful of promises, were preparing to fight the commission. Many of them had placed little Peruvian flags over their hovels, and were defying Dr. Hanson to set the torch.

A Peruvian gentleman with whom I conversed in the hotel gave me the local viewpoint:

"We *do* welcome this commission here to sanitize our city," he said, "yet we resent the burning. Suppose, señor, you invited a foreigner to the city of New York to sanitize your slums, and he, after looking at it, said that the tenement district ought to be destroyed. Coming from a foreigner, you yourself would resent it."

I was reminded of a story I had heard once in Lima. The Peruvian government had brought an American sanitary expert down from Washington several years earlier to clean up a city in the interior, but after bringing him as far as Lima, neglected to provide the promised transportation to the interior city. The expert, being eager to start work, kept annoying the Peruvian officials with requests for his transportation. "Why, my dear sir!" they all exclaimed. "Are you not receiving your salary? Why worry about the work?"

Just as the individual Peruvian, by wearing fine clothes, pretends to his neighbor that he is successful and affluent, so the collective republic, by importing a sanitary commission, was ready to pretend to the world that Paita was sanitary. In the average Peruvian mind, the presence of the commission should be sufficient.

"We are tired, señor, of hearing about the cleanliness of your Canal Zone," continued the Peruvian gentleman in my hotel. "No doubt, your Canal Zone is very clean, but we do not enjoy having it held up to us as a model."

After all, I could not entirely blame him. Possibly there are many things which the British do better than we do, yet I had almost come to blows with the captain of the oil tanker because he suggested such a possibility.

There was now an American in town, the Peruvian informed me, of the boastful aggressive type—the sort of American who made himself most obnoxious to the local residents, and brought all his fellow-countrymen into disrepute.

"He does not speak a word of Spanish, señor. He walks into the hotel here, and orders his dinner in English, and when the waiter fails to understand, he merely raises his voice to an angry roar, still speaking in English, and threatening at every moment to strike the little waiter because he can not understand. There he sits now, señor, over there in the plaza."

I looked across the street to the little square park, where grew a few palms and other bushes,



an oasis in the barren desert, and there, sitting on a bench in his shirt sleeves was a familiar-looking gringo with close-cropped hair and a pugilistic jaw. It was none other than Michael Francis O'Grady, the terror of South Boston!

I had always been O'Grady's favorite companion in the mining camp, because I could maintain a cherubic countenance indicative of credulity while he told his unbelievable yarns. He was overjoyed to see me.

"Yep," he said, "I left Morococha right after you did. That guy Sumner was getting too fresh, just because I insulted his wife, and I was afraid I might get mad and kill him. When you've got a temper like mine, you've got to be damned careful."

"But what are you doing here?"

"Nothing, damn it, nothing! D'you know what happened? I was on my way to Boston, and I just come ashore here for five minutes, and they wouldn't let me go back on the ship—the dirty, lousy, stinkin' gang of spicks. That's what they are, an' I been telling them so. They wanted me to go get a health certificate—some damned rigmarole you got to go through to get out of this God-forsaken Hell-Hole—and the ignorant devils couldn't speak enough English to tell me so! Just stood around the dock and jabbered a lot of spiggoty talk at me, like I could understand spiggoty! I don't know a word of this damned Spanish, and I'm glad of it! They ought to learn English, same as any other Christian!"



O'Grady talked for two hours about himself, without a pause. Upon leaving the mining camp, he had loafed around Lima for about a month. Some of the engineers' wives in Morococha, he said, had been dying for a chance to meet him somewhere, and he had expected four or five of them to sneak down to Lima after him, but he guessed their husbands were watching them too closely, because none of them showed up.

He had found romance here in Paita, however, where a little *chola* girl—she was kind of brown, he admitted, but pretty nice just the same—came out to meet him every night, after she had discharged her regular duties as a dishwasher in the hotel. They met clandestinely out along the sea-wall.

"How do you make her understand you?" I inquired.

"Oh, I got a system. It's great sport. You see, I put me arm around her and talk soft, like I was awful affectionate, and I say to her in English: 'You little knock-kneed, pigeon-toed, kinky-headed, pug-nosed, bow-legged, fat-faced daughter of a spig, I'd like to chuck you into the blooming ocean with a brick around your neck,'—only I say it soft-like, and she thinks I'm makin' love to her, and snuggles up tight as the devil and kisses me. It's great sport."

I was relieved when O'Grady's north-bound steamer arrived that afternoon, and I hastened to aid him on board. A few Americans of his type, who are always the loudest in their boast

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of the superiority of all things American, can do us more harm than ten times their number of intelligent Americans can ever repair.

The steamer by which O'Grady departed had brought to Paita a company of Peruvian soldiers from Lima, dispatched by the President to aid Dr. Hanson in the sanitation of Paita. They were sturdy little *cholos* from the Sierra, whipped into a fairly efficient organization by the French drill-masters who train the Peruvian army, and under their protection, the sanitary commission proceeded with the burning.

The houses where plague abounded were segregated by a cordon of soldiers, and the torch applied. The thin cane of which the buildings were constructed burned like tinder. Gathered in silent groups, beyond the cordon of troops, the owners of the dwellings stood with their neighbors, sullen, resentful. Paita—if the funds in the Peruvian treasury held out—would grow up again, under American engineers, into a real city, and Americans would be highly praised back in Lima, but here in Paita the natives would hate gringos to the end of their days.

As I watched the burning, a big brown native suddenly broke through the guards, and rushed furiously at an American commissioner with a knife. The Commissioner, a big broad-shouldered hero of Panama Canal days, did not move, but stood there, staring straight at the advancing native without flinching. Soldiers hastened to interfere, but interference was unnecessary. The

native, foiled in his rash effort to frighten the gringo, stopped and held out an empty hand.

"Shake," he said in Spanish, trying to back down gracefully from his defeat. "You are a brave man, señor."

Later, I heard, several efforts were made to blow up Dr. Hanson's residence with bombs, but without success.

When a south-bound steamer arrived, I had no difficulty in securing passage. A local Peruvian doctor, to whom I applied for the necessary certificate of health, asked me how I felt and upon my reply that I felt fine, he wrote out an official document proving to all concerned that my health was excellent, that I was not suffering from yellow fever, bubonic plague, or any other malady, and that I was therefore fit to be received in Callao.

On the steamer which carried me away, an American tried to explain for my benefit the peculiar attitude of the Latins toward Anglo-Saxons:

"Oh, they like us and they don't like us. I've lived here for twenty years, and the longer I live here the less I understand it. They're a superficial, impractical people. They want their country to be developed but they resent the process of development. They want modern cities, so that they can strut around and feel proud of themselves, but they don't want the temporary inconvenience that comes with the rebuilding."

After all, it is hard for us to understand each other. (We Americans spend most of our time

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rushing to work, trying to get something done, seeking to make money or earn fame. The Peruvian spends most of his time enjoying life, merely pretending to himself and his neighbors that he has plenty of money and fame and needs to seek no more. The American who goes to Peru merely to play, finds the Peruvians an agreeable people. The American who goes to work, finds them annoying, and in turn annoys them. They welcome him because he is a necessity, but under the surface they dislike him.

I have frequently wondered why my fellow-countrymen who continually find fault with Peru remain in the country. Perhaps they find a satisfaction in living where they can habitually feel superior to their neighbors. Certainly, despite the hidden prejudice which the average Peruvian cherishes towards us, we are always certain in a country populated largely with *cholos* to be of more importance than we would be in our own country.

When my steamer finally reached Callao, those who had embarked at Paita were required to go into quarantine. On the quarantine island, I found a Lima newspaper attacking Dr. Hanson's commission.

"We invited the Americans to Paita to sanitize our city," it stated, "and not to destroy it."

After the Peruvians from Paita had agreed that it was a splendid editorial, we went to dinner. For the first course we had fish soup. For the second course we had fish. After that we had fish.

For four days on that quarantine island we had fish. Even the Peruvians became disgusted.

“Well,” one of them finally admitted—the same man with whom I had talked in the hotel at Paita—“if the sanitation of that city removes the necessity of going to this place and eating fish, it can’t be such a bad commission after all.”

Certainly the more intelligent Peruvians welcome American progressiveness, even though they resent our brusqueness. Yet, when it disturbs the composure of their pleasure-seeking Latin existence, they resent it. The opportunities in South America are not only for the big corporations, but for big men who can override many perplexing problems.

## CHAPTER TEN

### IN THE CAPITAL OF THE INCAS

ONE day while I was working for *The Leader*, a Peruvian acquaintance came to me in great excitement, waving a newspaper.

“Señor,” he cried, “there is a revolution in the United States!”

“What do you mean?”

He showed me the paper. It contained a belated account of an old Republican Convention in Chicago, in which Senator Lodge had said several uncomplimentary things about the late Wilson administration.

“You see!” exclaimed the Peruvian. “The President’s enemies openly attack him! Is the army disloyal? Why do they not suppress this demonstration?”

I explained to him that in the United States it is any citizen’s privilege to abuse the Chief Executive to his heart’s content, that no effort is made either by the army or by the President himself to check such demonstrations, and that the Republican Party would wait patiently until March 4th instead of descending in a body to the White House and forcibly ejecting Mr. Wilson.



He smiled in polite incredulity. "What funny people!" he laughed.

His own President Leguia had gained office by the more simple expedient of first winning the good-will of the army, and then walking into the official palace to hand the former incumbent a ticket on the first steamer out of town.

Although writers frequently tell us these days that the comic opera revolution has passed out of Latin-American politics, along with duels and such things, the truth is that these little affairs still flourish, not in such quantities perhaps as in the days of Richard Harding Davis, but still in sufficient numbers to give variety to life in the smaller republics.

Peru, at the time of my visit, however, was a most orderly little country. Leguia, remembering his own methods in attaining the Presidency, was taking every possible precaution to discourage other patriots from following the same course. On the anniversary of his "election," he strung the whole capital with electric lights as an indication of the city's high esteem for himself. In reality, he *was* very popular, for he was a most capable and progressive Chief Executive, but just to make sure of his popularity, he kept the army patrolling the streets on anniversary night in case some rival should seize upon this evening as an auspicious occasion for a counter-revolution.

Thus I was denied a long-cherished hope of seeing a Latin-American uprising, yet Fate was

kind enough to show me a few little incidents of the comic opera variety.

Griffis came to me one day with a telegraphic dispatch from Bolivia.

"Peruvian Embassy attacked by mob in La Paz," it stated. "Bolivian troops mobilizing on border for war."

"You're promoted, Foster," announced Griffis. "You're no longer the reportorial staff. You're now Special War Correspondent. Run up to Bolivia and get the dope on this affair, but don't tell them you're from Peru, or you're likely to be mobbed yourself."

I had grown tired of rambling around for *The Leader*, among the various mining and oil camps, and had been planning to resign my job, and to wander off to new lands, but this commission sounded intriguing. I had always wanted to travel incognito, and while several people (notably the Oroyans) had offered at various times to mob me, I had always been denied this interesting experience.

So I caught the next steamer south to Mollendo, the terminus of the nearest railway to Bolivia.

The war-cloud which I had been sent to cover was a new development in an old political tangle—the Tacna-Arica dispute. Until this moment, Peru and Bolivia had been Allies in this quarrel, opposing their more aggressive southern neighbor, Chile, ever since the Chileans had thrashed the two of them in the War of 1879. At that time the victorious Chileans had taken from both of the

vanquished nations the rich nitrate lands of the West Coast. This had left Bolivia bottled up in the Andes without a seaport. And Chile, to make sure that Bolivia remained in the Andes, had taken an additional slice of Peru's coast-line, the provinces of Tacna-Arica.

These last provinces were taken with the understanding that after ten years of Chilean rule, the inhabitants of the district should decide by vote whether they would become a permanent part of Chile or return to Peru. But when the ten years elapsed, disputes had arisen, and Chile had continued to hold them. This commercially worthless, but strategically valuable, desert had thus become the theme of a ceaseless controversy, on the West Coast. In Peru it was always a useful topic wherewith speakers could bring the audience to its feet, shouting "Viva Peru!" and "Down with Chile!" All office-seekers made vain promises to get it back. The more intelligent Peruvians hoped that some day the United States or the League of Nations, or Santa Claus in some other form, would take it away from Chile and return it to its original owners. The others hoped that some day Peru and Bolivia, by combining their forces again, might be more successful.

But Chile had just turned a clever diplomatic *coup d'état* by hinting unofficially to Bolivia that she might give her access to the sea through this former Peruvian territory. Bolivia leaped at this chance to secure her much desired seaport.

Peru resented it, since she still claimed the territory as her own and felt that Chile had no right to suggest giving it away. Peru and Bolivia forgot their old alliance. While the more clever Chilean diplomats sat back and laughed up their sleeves, Lima and La Paz exchanged sharp notes. Peruvians were mobbed in Bolivia; Bolivians were mobbed in Peru; and both countries, equally matched with five thousand soldiers each, talked about going to war.

And at Mollendo I ran into the first Peruvian victory.

On board my steamer was the Bolivian Minister of Hacienda, or Secretary of the Treasury, returning from a visit to the United States. Because of the international flare-up he thought it best to remain on the ship—a British vessel—until he reached the Chilean port of Arica, whence another railway ran up to La Paz, but idle curiosity led him to go ashore for a moment at Mollendo. Mollendo happens to be the roughest port on the coast. As in the case of most other West Coast ports, there is no protection here from the open sea, and the little row-boat which carried us to the shore rocked frantically upon the big rollers from the Pacific. Even at the wharf, which was partially guarded by a breakwater, passengers had to be transferred to land on a swinging chair, hoisted by a derrick.

The Bolivian Minister was not recognized upon landing, but when, after strolling about town for a few minutes, he returned to re-embark, some

one saw him and raised the shout of "Spy!" The Peruvian boatmen refused to row him to the steamer. A mob surrounded the indignant diplomat, whose Latin temper escaped control, and who began to tell them what he thought of Peruvians in a most undiplomatic manner, with most undiplomatic language. Pelted with banana peelings and other harmless but uncomplimentary missiles, the Minister made his way to police headquarters, where the Peruvian commandante, since no war had been officially declared, performed his duty by sending the mistreated official to the dock under escort, where the boatmen were ordered to row him to his ship.

But when he reached the steamer, because of the heavy swell, he had to leap to catch the ladder. The Peruvian boatmen sat quietly at their oars until he poised himself for the leap; then, suddenly, they backed water. The Diplomat did succeed in catching the bottom rung, but the rising wave swept up and drenched him to the neck.

"Viva Peru!" shouted the boatmen, while the watching crowd upon the breakwater joined in the cheer of victory. "Viva Peru!"

It promised to be a fascinating sort of a war. I hastened to the railway station to inquire about trains. There I learned that it would take me three days to reach Lake Titicaca, and that having reached Lake Titicaca, I should have to wait another three days for a steamer to Bolivia. Everything traveled slowly in Peru, including even war correspondents. And since the treasury of



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*The Leader* did not permit my purchasing an airplane, I had to bide my time.

So I started for the scene of battle as a tourist usually covers the same route, for this part of Southern Peru, with its historical relics of Inca days, is the mecca of tourists.

The first day's ride up the Southern Railway was tedious—a slow, hot ride across the sandy coastal desert, a desert which was not content with stretching away in a vista of brown sand as far as the eye could reach, but which insisted upon rising up in little spiral whirlwinds, entering the car window, and penetrating into the very eye itself.

Occasionally, however, we stopped at a water tank, surrounded by a tiny garden, a flowering oasis which proved that this coastal desert needs only irrigation to make it exceedingly fertile. These gardens, mere one-acre plots, with the brown sand coming right up to their fences, produced all kinds of tropical fruits, which the natives came aboard to sell at ridiculously low prices.

Among their offerings were bundles of sugar cane, sawed into two-foot lengths. The Peruvian passengers bought these eagerly, and from this moment the car became as noisy as a German restaurant. To extract the sweet juice of this cane according to Hoyle, one grasps it as a musician grasps a clarinet, tears away the heavy bamboo exterior with his teeth, and sucks lustily at the pithy interior. If this can be done deli-



cately, without loud gurgling noises, no one in the car knew the secret.

As we reached the foothills of the Andes, the unbroken expanse of sand gave way to dull brown heights, like those first seen upon the Central Railway. We still passed semi-circular patches of the sand, however, the famous *medanos* of Southern Peru, crescent-shaped piles carried up into the mountains by the wind, all of the same symmetrical shape, moving with glacier-like dignity toward the mountains, to be piled eventually by the forces of nature in a pocket or *orroya* among the peaks, where it would remain a gray blotch upon the brown landscape and resemble the deposits with which the guano birds embellish the mountains along the sea-coast.

Evening brought us to Arequipa, at an altitude of 7,600 feet, the second city of Peru in population, and the first in attractiveness. Arequipa is a beautiful flowering oasis among the barren foothills, a quaint Moorish city with many portales and balconies, with a charming plaza in the center, and tiny narrow alley-like streets that wind picturesquely out into the suburbs. The climate is that of continuous Spring, the sky above is always blue, and for background the city has a line of snow-capped peaks, with the volcano of Misti clearly outlined in the center.

Possibly no mountain in Peru is the subject of so many legends and traditions as Misti. Although there are several peaks of greater height, there is none so distinct in form. Misti stands

entirely alone, rising in a huge cone almost from the plain. It is part of a long ridge, and by no means the highest part, but on each side of it the rest of the ridge dips down to the level of the surrounding country, leaving Misti to stand by itself. Arequipañians frequently speak of themselves as the sons and daughters of Misti. The Indians of the surrounding country worship it with much reverence, regarding it as the source of the earthquakes which are often felt in the region, and which have more than once in days past laid the neighboring villages in ruins.

These superstitions in regard to the mountain date back to prehistoric times. The ruins of ancient pagan temples have been found within the crater of the volcano, and even to-day one may see near the top a great iron cross placed there in 1677, when a party of Spanish priests exorcised the mountain and prayed that it would not erupt again and ruin their city. On a road that passes below its base to-day there are two heaps of stones about a half-mile apart, and the Indians who pass that way religiously carry a stone from one pile and deposit it on the other, according to an ancient custom that has survived all modern teaching. These Indians believe that by the performance of this rite they appease the mountain for their insolence in approaching so close to its sacred person.

On the second day's ride, from Arequipa to Juliaca, the scenery improved, yet it never equaled in grandeur the mountains crossed by



MOST INTERESTING OF ALL IS THE OLD FORTRESS OF SACSA-  
HUAMAN



MT. MISTI AS SEEN FROM AREQUIPA



the less-traveled Central Railway. Instead of carrying one through tortuous ravines, the Southern Railway runs across wide plateaus carpeted with yareta moss or bunches of ychu grass, with a line of snowy peaks far away on the horizon. Llamas or sheep dot the landscape. Occasionally a herd of guanacos or vicuñas, the wild ancestors of the alpaca and llama, may be seen in the distance, scampering away at the train's approach.

In mid-afternoon we passed the crest of the Andes, at 14,666 feet, a thousand feet lower than the high point on the Central, and from then on the train descended steadily toward Lake Titicaca. Juliaca, our stopping point, was but a half hour's ride from the lake. On train nights, Juliaca's one hotel is always crowded, and since all passengers knew this, there was a mad rush for that one hotel.

It was the Grand Hotel Ratti, but the "ratty" part of its name was due not to its condition (although as a descriptive adjective it was not inappropriate) but to the fact that it was owned by Señor Ratti, who also owned most of the other real estate in town, for which he seemed greatly to be pitied. Juliaca was built of mud, stone, and discolored tin-roofs. Before the hotel some one had tried to lay out a plaza, in imitation of all Latin-American towns, but on account of the altitude nothing but bunch grass would grow here, and the one ornament in the barren square was an aged windmill which pumped up the town's water supply with many painful, creaking protests.

I managed to secure a room, sharing it with an American doctor, a Porto-Rican tin merchant, and a Peruvian engineer. It was a large room, and might have been fairly comfortable if Andean hotels were equipped with steam-heat. We had barely retired to our four cots, however, when some one in the room overhead began to thump on the floor. The first performer had hardly ceased when a second performer took up the thumping, followed by a third, and finally by a fourth.

"Somebody's interested in Russian folk dancing," suggested the American doctor.

"No, señor," spoke up the Peruvian engineer, "the army bayonet school is probably working on the dummies."

"Hell," said the Porto Rican tin-merchant, who spoke English fluently and idiomatically, "hell no; the final match is being played in the national handball tournament."

We learned, however, that the roomers upstairs, finding their blankets insufficient, were merely jumping up and down all night in an effort to keep warm. And long before morning, in the cold Andean air, we had climbed out of our own beds, donned our sweaters, and were jumping ourselves.

I still had three days to kill before the lake steamer would arrive to carry me to the scene of the gathering war clouds, and so I took the side-trip to Cuzco, despite my resolve never to visit any of the places described in guide books.



Cuzco, the famous capital of the ancient Inca Empire, is a day's ride from Juliaca, on a branch that runs northward, at right angles from the main line to Titicaca. While the lower valleys into which my train descended were very far from tropical, they were noticeably warmer than the heights at Titicaca. Yellow rice fields gave these valleys a vague resemblance to the Philippines, an effect increased by a sort of mandarin hat worn by the natives, a flat Oriental lid of straw decorated with strips of colored cloth.

The Indians of this section are most picturesque, dressing always in flaming red costumes, which are sometimes surprisingly scanty, despite the cold. Possibly, in comparison with the air of the higher altitudes close by, the temperature of the Cuzco valley is considered warm by these natives. In the costume of the men, trousers never reach below the knees, while children often run about naked. The women wear very low-necked costumes, which greatly facilitates the feeding of babies. This and other necessary functions, which society does not practice ordinarily in the drawing-room, are always performed in public by the Indians.

The natives, as a rule, speak only Quechua. One who ventures from the beaten trail, trusting to his Spanish to procure him food and shelter, soon finds himself compelled to revert to sign language. The only phrase they know is "*Regaleme*," which the beggars shout, running after the train with hand stretched out even as it

leaves the station. These Indians are extremely childlike, and a favorite sport, when a brakeman is not on the rear platform, is to hitch onto the back end of the train and ride out of town a few hundred yards. This pastime was practiced throughout the day's ride, not only by the children, but even by grown men.

Cuzco interested me despite my prejudice against the so-called "interesting" places, and I spent an enjoyable day rambling about among its ruins, under the guidance of the kindly rector of a local university, who secretly pitied me because I did not seem sufficiently enthusiastic when told who carved the altar in the cathedral.

Had the city been designed personally by Thomas Cook or Burton Holmes for the entertainment of tourists, it could not better suit its purpose. Every second structure in town is an ancient Spanish church, with something of decrepit historical interest about it. The old Spanish device of building a beautiful cathedral for the Lord, in the hope that it might catch His eye and keep Him from noting the other things which the Spaniards were doing, was never more overworked than at Cuzco.

Practically the entire city is built upon the massive stone foundations of the Inca capital, stones so ponderous and so perfectly put together that even the *conquistadores* in all their zeal for the destruction of all things heathen, could not destroy them, and were forced to utilize them as



EVERYWHERE IN CUZCO ONE STUMBLES UPON HIGH  
SMOOTH WALLS AND BATTLEMENTS OF HUGE ROCKS



the foundations of their own puny ginger-bread structures. The work of the Incas still survives, as perfect as when first constructed, while that of the much later Spaniards is already crumbling and falling to pieces.

The Incas built not beautifully or ornamentally but solidly. They were a nation of masons and stone-cutters surpassing the pyramid builders of Egypt. With what instruments they cut the stone, where they cut it, or how they ever carried it and fitted it together, is still unknown. Yet everywhere in Cuzco, one stumbles upon high smooth walls and battlements of huge rocks, each piece weighing many tons, all of them cut smoothly and neatly, and fitted together without a bit of mortar, but fitted so tightly that nowhere, among all these walls that abound everywhere in the city, is there a spot where a thin knife-blade can be inserted between the rocks.

These stones are not always uniformly square in shape, but frequently irregular, some of them having as many as twelve distinct sides, but invariably they fit finely with the adjoining stones. They need no designs or carving to make them a subject for wonder and admiration, and the Incas have not attempted to decorate them. Save for one old temple, where some seven crude snakes have been sculptured, one finds no attempt at ornamentation, and this one attempt is an extremely poor one. The Inca was not an artist—merely a great worker, and above all a supreme coward,

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wherefore he built massively for his own protection against his less civilized, but more courageous, neighbors.

Most interesting of all the ruins, is the old fortress of Sacsahuaman on a hill overlooking the city. Here one finds tremendous stones, twenty feet high and ten feet square on the bottom, fitted together as neatly as the smaller stones that formed the temples in the city beneath. To move such rocks to-day, with all our modern methods, is a task which few contractors would undertake, while to cut them smoothly and fit them together as evenly as did the Incas would be almost an impossibility. Where they cut them is not known, although the nearest cliff from which they could possibly have brought them is a half-mile distant.

The hill upon which the fortress is constructed has a flat top, some three hundred paces long and half as wide. On the side toward the city, the steep slope of the hill makes a wall unnecessary, while on another side, bordering a ravine, only a small defense is required. Upon the other sides, however, the fortifications are marvelous. They consist of three walls, each about seventeen feet high, built upon terraces so that each interior wall overlooks its neighbor. They are built with salients and angles, so that no one point can be attacked without being commanded by the others. Among all the feudal castles of Europe, designed from knowledge gained by centuries of fighting, none are to be found constructed with more skillful understanding of strategy.



Cuzco, which is full of legends of hidden gold, has been explored by many treasure-seekers. On the hill of Sacsahuaman there is a rough cave, for instance, which tradition says is the entrance to a series of underground passageways connecting with the Temple of the Sun and other old Inca buildings in the city, half a mile beneath.

About seventy years ago, a native who fell into this cave emerged four days later beneath the Church of the Jesuits, bruised and haggard and starving, but carrying in his hand a piece of gold of the size and shape of a corn cob. The story says that he placed this nugget upon the altar as an offering, and while bowed in prayer fell dead. Before losing consciousness, however, he babbled of underground chambers laden with the precious metal. It is believed that he stumbled upon the eleven millions of dollars in bullion which the Jesuits are said to have hidden in the early days. Immediately following the incident there was a rush of people for the cave, most of them boys from the *colegios*, some seven of whom never returned. None of them discovered the gold, and the government, after partially blocking up the cave, forbade people to enter. If the eleven millions were ever hidden there, they are still somewhere under Sacsahuaman.

I had come to Cuzco merely because my search for comic opera had been blocked by the delays of South America travel, yet Fortune favored me to some extent. In the late afternoon, as I was smoking cigarettes on the throne of the Incas at

the ancient fortress of Sacsahuaman, I beheld a party of two dozen distinguished looking gentlemen in high hats approaching with a pair of weapons that resembled the cavalry sabers of Napoleon's time. It seems that Señor Escalante, editor of *El Comercio*, and Señor Castro, editor of *El Nacional*, both of Cuzco, were about to settle an editorial quarrel upon the field of honor.

I had already noted that newspaper men in Latin America invariably carry canes. I had at first supposed that they did so for the sake of dignity, but after reading the editorials, I decided it must be for self-defense. Every Latin-American city, no matter how small, has half a dozen sheets published not as commercial ventures but as organs for the saying of mean things about each other.

Escalante and Castro had grown so heated in debate over a local political campaign that only blood could atone for the insults. From the duel it appeared that both of them had read Mark Twain. They were still insulting each other as they met sword in hand, but both were shaking visibly.

"Go on, smite him," shouted Escalante's seconds, as neither of them made a move to start hostilities.

Thus encouraged, Escalante made a wild swipe with his weapon, clipping off a piece of Castro's ear.

Immediately swords were dropped, the combatants embraced each other, and the seconds led them back to town, where champagne was opened.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### A WAR CORRESPONDENT WITHOUT A WAR

**B**Y the time I returned to Puno, on the shore of Lake Titicaca, the threatened war between Peru and Bolivia had subsided. The United States had warned the three countries concerned that it would look with disfavor upon any interruption to the peace of the Pacific Coast, and the gentle hint had proved effective.

It appeared that in my eager search for violence and bloodshed I must content myself with having seen a Bolivian cabinet officer partially ducked in the ocean and a Peruvian editor partially relieved of one ear. But there was still one ray of hope. Our State Department's note was regarded everywhere as a defense of Peru against her neighbors; it was just barely possible that anti-American feeling would be running high in Chile and Bolivia, and that I might find adventure there.

And so I took the night boat across Titicaca.

Titicaca in many ways is a remarkable lake. Although of almost as great size as Lake Erie, it is perched up in the Andes at a height of two miles above sea-level. Wherefore geographers and travelers feel called upon to rave about its marvels until no visitor, after reading their rav-

ings, can see the lake without feeling a trifle disappointed.

For the most part, its shores are only the bleak, colorless hills of the Andes. In the early morning, when the pink glow of sunrise falls upon a distant rim of snow-clad peaks, the scenery is beautiful. But at other times, Titicaca, save for its geographical situation, is not impressive. A few brown reeds line the marshy bank; a few hovels of mud and stone shelter Indians whose picturesque Andean costume fails to impress one who has seen the more vivid costume of the Cuzco Valley; otherwise there is only the bleak, sepia-colored highlands of which any old-timer in the mountains has long since wearied.

The only really new sight which Titicaca offers is the *balsa*, or raft, upon which the natives navigate the lake as crudely as their Inca ancestors did before them. It is constructed of the reeds which line the marshes, lashed together in four bundles, two large ones forming the body of the raft, while two smaller ones serve as gunwhales. A pair of sticks serve as mast, holding a sail which is likewise built of reeds. And with this contrivance, the Indians, none of whom have ever learned to swim in these icy waters, will sail the whole 110 miles of lake.

My steamer, a small model of an up-to-date ocean liner, landed me in the morning at Guaqui, on the Bolivian side of Titicaca.

Here several battalions of Bolivian troops—the recently mobilized forces—were maneuver-



SUNDAY MORNING IN THE PLAZA  
AT LA PAZ



REED BALSA OR RAFT ON LAKE  
TITICACA





ing upon the plains. The influence of their German instructors was apparent, for while they had not incorporated the goose-step into their march, they wore uniforms modeled on those of the German army, and there was a Prussian snap and precision about their manual of arms quite unequaled by the French-trained Peruvians. Their officers were mere boys, much younger than the Peruvian officers of corresponding grade, but they were very military both in dress and bearing. And seeing the Bolivian troops, I felt that it was fortunate for Peru that the United States had intervened.

All talk of war with Peru had ceased, apparently, and there was no need for my entering the country incognito.

From Guaqui, it was but a few hours ride to La Paz. The railroad led across a high, bleak plateau, sometimes covered with fields of grain, sometimes barren and littered with stones. Habitations were infrequent, and usually mere hovels of mud or stone, thatched with ychu grass, like the hovels of Andean Peru. Each hut, however, was topped by a large cross, erected by the superstitious peasantry for protection against the lightning which causes so much havoc in the altitudes.

Not far from Guaqui we passed Tiahuanaco, the site of the oldest prehistoric ruins in South America. A few of the unearthed stone monuments were visible from the train. They are so ancient that when the Spaniards arrived, the

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Incas themselves had forgotten who built them. The Spaniards were variously informed that they had been made in a single night by invisible hands, that Tiahuanaco had been the abode of the Creator of the Universe, Who here had created the sun, moon, and stars, and that He, presumably for practice, had built these monuments; that the statues were men and women whom the Creator had changed into stone as a punishment for disobedience.

Unlike the masonry of the later Incas, these ruins at Tiahuanaco are embellished with much carving, most of the figures being of men or women engaged in a stiff, graceless sort of dance. Most of the present natives of the region now carve miniature representations of these images, and offer them for sale to the railroad passengers, after the South American custom, asking various prices when the train first stops, and selling their goods at a song as the train pulls out.

La Paz, in spite of the warnings from every writer who had traveled the route before, was a surprise. During the entire journey, my train had been heading across a level plateau toward a distant range of mountains, with no city in sight, when suddenly the plateau dropped before us into a deep ravine, until then invisible, and below us were the red-tiled roofs of Bolivia's capital. Yet it is fitting, perhaps, that one should come upon La Paz by surprise; for La Paz itself is a city of many surprises.

Situated at the bottom of an immense *orroyo*,

with snow-clad peaks towering above it, with streets that zig-zag up or down hill so sharply that the traveler who ventures one block from his hotel must perform a veritable feat of mountain climbing to get back again, La Paz is indeed a true mountain city, yet in the center there is an attractive green plaza, and about it are grouped a very modern hotel, several excellent cafés, a splendid stone government building, and a splendid cathedral. And in this plaza, before all these modern structures, the Indians who comprise almost the entire population of the Bolivian capital, pass with their picturesque llama trains, wearing the same brilliant-hued costumes which their ancestors wore in the days of the Incas.

Of the recent demonstrations against Peru there was little evidence, for the excitable Latins, quick to rise in their wrath, seem to calm down almost as quickly. In the Peruvian embassy I saw a few broken windows. Also a newspaper building had been wrecked. Bautista Saavedra, an editor who had dared to defend Bolivia's former Ally, had been run out of town during the demonstration, and his publishing plant partially destroyed.

The American minister in La Paz, to whom I bore a letter of introduction, entertained me in his private office for two hours by reading me a candid lecture against our American colony in Lima, including even our *chargé d'affairs*. At the time of the disturbance, it seems that each of our three diplomatic representatives in the three

countries concerned had sent long dispatches to the State Department, urging the United States to side with the particular republic to which he was accredited. Our minister to Bolivia was quite incensed that the State Department had chosen to disregard his recommendations and side with Peru.

"You're publishing a whole lot of rubbish in that *West Coast Leader*," he stormed. "You're boosting Peru and soaking Bolivia. Why, see here, young man, no country in South America is doing more for American mining companies than Bolivia is doing. And you, just because you happen to be down in Peru, side with the Peruvians!"

He, presumably because he happened to be up in Bolivia, was siding with the Bolivians. After all, an American in any one of the three countries, to maintain local good-will, had to play politics to the extent of siding with the people of the particular country in which he found himself. In Chile, at the time our State Department sided with Peru, it seems that the American business men in Santiago had played the game by protesting openly against the attitude of Washington, thereby showing the Chileans that they were in sympathy with Chile, even though their own government was not.

There seemed to be no anti-American feeling in Bolivia, however. The Bolivian government was still awarding concessions to American capitalists; the Bolivian army had just imported a

Captain Donald Hudson to take charge of its newly organized aviation section, consisting of one airplane; and Americans in general seemed to find as ready a welcome as in Peru. Our American minister in La Paz, it seems, although our State Department's note had been decidedly pro-Peruvian, had cleverly managed to persuade the Bolivians that it was pro-Bolivian.

Everything was quiet in La Paz, yet I stayed for over a week in the hope that some excitement might arise. Since I knew no one in town, I employed a scheme which I had always found effective when finding myself alone in a strange foreign city; having taken a room at a hotel, I went to the hotel piano, and started to play American rag-time. If there was another lone American in the hotel, this was sure to attract him; for the Latins, although capable musicians, have no talent for our popular syncopated music,

And presently it attracted Patrick Mulvaney.

Mulvaney was a fat gentleman, of the genus T. T. T., a prospector by profession, and a world-wanderer by inclination. According to his conversation, he had made several fortunes and lost them.

"I was on the road to success down in Mexico," he told me, "only luck was ag'in me. I introduced prize-fighting down there—brought down a couple of pugs from the border, advertised an eight-round bout, and sold enough tickets to put me on easy street. Carranza had put the ban on bull-fighting, and Mexico was just waiting for a sub-



stitute. Only luck was ag'in me. One of the pugs got knocked for the count in the second round, and the crowd got mad and mobbed the box-office and took their money back. You see, I forgot to explain to 'em that a knockout ended the scrap, an' they thought they was cheated out of the last six rounds."

Just now Mulvaney was taking a vacation. His partner, Red Patterson, had fallen heir to his brother's ten thousand dollars life insurance, and the two of them were on their way to Lima to celebrate.

Red, who took his title from his shock of brilliant hair, was another T. T. T., a seemingly harmless sort of individual who could usually be found leaning against a bar, with a hazy expression in his eyes, and a good-natured grin upon his freckled face. According to Mulvaney, the deceased brother had left him this money with the request that he devote himself to charitable enterprises.

"That's what we're doing," confirmed Red, to whom Mulvaney introduced me in a near-by café. "We're institootin' a movement for the benefit of needy an' deservin' liquor dealers. That dago there"—pointing to the stout Bolivian bartender—"is most deservin'. 'E's got a wife an' four other women to support, an' I'm doin' all I can for 'im."

We had dinner together, not in the best hotel, but in an adjoining restaurant. Red Patterson, who scorned a white collar as a mark of effemi-



nacy, declined to enter a dining room patronized by "a gang o' dukes." "Dukes" was Red's term for all who wore white collars.

"So you came up here to get mobbed, did you?" Mulvaney echoed, when I confided to them my reason for visiting Bolivia. "You just come along with us to-night, and you'll get mobbed."

Several other miners on vacation had joined us during dinner, and after an hour's preparation at the bar, the party started for the scene of Latin-American night life—the dance hall. The preparation had been most successful, and the party was singing lustily as we marched through the narrow streets, Red leading the chorus with "It'll be an 'ot time in the old town to-night!" Several little Bolivian policeman looked at us doubtfully, but evidently decided that seven husky gringos were too many to be silenced. In Bolivia, as in Peru, the first qualification for a policeman seems to be that he shall be under four feet in height. One of the little fellows did make a polite request that we lower our voices, but when Red handed him a large Bolivian fifty-cent piece, the officer bowed to the ground, and the singing continued.

The "dance hall,"—this is but a polite name for the resort—was running openly, after the fashion in Latin America. Another little policeman stood outside the door, presumably to preserve order, but he made no objection to our entering the place. Inside we found a large parlor, with red carpet, red wall paper, red chairs,

and various other furnishings of the same shade. A little blind musician, addressed as "*maestro*," was playing with frantic enthusiasm at a tinny-sounding piano in one corner of the room; in the other corner a colored gentleman was pouring out drinks at a tiny wooden bar. The girls—mostly Chilean, with a sprinkling of Bolivian, Peruvian, Argentine, and even two or three French—were sailing wildly about the floor in the arms of young Bolivian dandies, while a crowd of white-collared young men leaned upon their canes and waited their turn to join in the festivities.

Nor were the patrons limited to young men. One old gentleman, distinguished in appearance despite his brownish complexion, said to be a prominent ex-senator, and at present in a decided state of intoxication, was doing a series of ridiculously complicated steps with a little dark-eyed *chileno* girl, and bumping furiously into every other couple on the floor, meanwhile demanding in a high-pitched voice that the other dancers clear the floor, and give him room to display his terpsichorean accomplishments.

One of the other young men, dancing past him, gave voice to the impolite remark: "You're a damned fool!"

The old gentleman blinked in surprise at such a suggestion.

"No, señor; no, señor, I am not a damned fool!"

He stated the fact without anger. Somewhat

dazed both by liquor and by his surprise at being so addressed, he spoke merely as a gentleman who wishes to clarify a misapprehension. But the younger man, also somewhat unsteady with alcohol, insisted upon his point, gently and without malice.

“Yes, indeed, señor, you are very much a damned fool.”

At such insistence, the old gentleman deserted his partner, and shook a cane at the younger gentleman. The stout, slatternly *madame* of the place promptly intervened, seizing the aged senator, and trying to soothe him, while several girls seized the younger dandy. It seemed to be the desire of every one present to avoid a fight, and every one, in his intoxication, seemed to consider it his duty to pacify his fellows. Wherefore everybody seized his nearest neighbor, and pushing him against the wall, began to urge restraint. Apparently there was not a soul present who thought of fighting, but each, in his hazy state of mind, fancied that his neighbor was so thinking. One young Bolivian, who spoke a few words of English, devoted himself to the task of pacifying Mulvaney.

“No hit nobody, meester,” he urged, backing him against a red plush sofa. “Everything all right; no hit nobody!”

It probably had not been Mulvaney’s intention to hit anybody; in fact, he was enjoying the affair hugely, but he resented being pushed against the

sofa, and so he took the would-be pacifist by the nape of the neck, and laid him up against the piano.

"Attaboy," said Red Patterson, whereupon he took hold of another would-be pacifist who had similarly jostled him, and lifted him across the bar. "Everything's all right. Don't hit nobody."

It seemed that everybody in the place, having similarly resented the well-meant pacifist efforts of his neighbor, was now engaged in the pleasant occupation of blackening his neighbor's eye. The dance-hall became a battlefield. We surged across the floor in a struggling mob, most of the men too drunk to inflict serious injury upon their adversaries, everybody urging his neighbor to stop fighting. Red Patterson's voice sounded clearly above the racket, warning his fellow contestants, "Everything's all right! Don't hit nobody! Hit everybody!"

Then a policeman's whistle sounded, and a dozen diminutive officers of the law came tumbling through the open door-way, to join in the demonstration. It was a difficult riot to quell, for each contestant, with the possible exception of Red, was merely seeking to pacify his neighbors, but finally the pushing ceased, while the lieutenant of police gave us a severe scolding, asking us to remember where we were, and warning us as gentlemen in a gentlemen's resort that we should behave like gentlemen. Then, led by the lieutenant, we all adjourned to the bar, to drink a round

at Red Patterson's expense, after which all the young dandies embraced each other, after which we drank another round at the senator's expense, after which we embraced each other again, after which—and so on, until the hour of one o'clock sounded upon the near-by cathedral tower, and the police informed the gathering regretfully but politely that the bar must now be closed.

The following day, being Sunday, was market day in La Paz. Natives came in from all over the surrounding country, and the whole city became a huge market-place. Every street in town became lined with rows of sturdy Aymará Indians, dressed in every color of the rainbow, sitting cross-legged along the sidewalk, with their variety of wares spread on a blanket before them.

They sold everything—llama hides, vicuña rugs, vegetables, fruit, Indian pottery, dolls, crude flutes or drums, leather sandals, homemade shoes, blankets, dyestuffs, clothing, wooden spoons, every imaginable product of native labor.

Particularly in evidence were huge bales of coca-leaves, the chewing-tobacco of the Andes, brought up by muleback from the tropical country of the interior. In early times, according to historians, the runners who formed the telegraph system of the Inca empire, after racing four or five hundred miles across the mountains, would pause to stick a few coca leaves in their frothing mouths, and thus stimulated, would gallop away for another five hundred. To-day every Andean Indian, from Colombia down to Paraguay, has



his cheek habitually extended with a wad of these leaves, and will refuse to work unless he has this artificial stimulus. Undoubtedly this *is* a stimulus, for the Indian will travel for two or three days without food when provided with enough coca-leaves, yet these leaves, from which we get our drug cocaine, while they seem to give temporary physical strength, are undoubtedly responsible for the degenerate mentality of the natives.

A perfect bedlam reigns during the market day, the pushing and jostling of the crowds, the noise of the many haggling voices, the squealing of the pigs as they are dragged to the market, the hee-hawing of the burros as they plod along, completely hidden in their mass of stuff strapped to their little backs, the roaring of the bulls in the cattle yards, the squashing of thousands of bare feet through the muck and mud of the plaza, all the various rackets combining to make a riot of sound that eclipses a menagerie at feeding time.

Through the crowds stalk the *alcaldes*, or mayors of the different Indian villages, their rank indicated by the staff which they carry, a staff of black wood encircled by three silver bands. Except for this staff, there is nothing to mark them as rulers, for they generally are as bare-footed, mud-covered, and whisker draped as the rest of their tribe. Sometimes they sell stuff like their fellow townsmen, but more often they drape their dirty ponchos around them with a Roman toga effect and stand by themselves with an air of great hauteur and authority.



As a rule, each village specializes in the manufacture and sale of one certain article, and the members of each village group themselves apart. As a result, one may notice a sameness of types in each group that contrasts strikingly with the type of the group next door. In one spot will be a line of women with large noses selling vicuña skins. In the next group will be a line of cross-eyed women selling native embroidery. In the next group will be a line of pock-marked women selling coca-leaves. The one thing they wear in common is the colorful costume and the layers of mud.

As I pushed my way through the motley crowd I came upon a party of tropical Indians who quite evidently had just made their first journey to the capital from their homes in the Yungas Valley. They were sturdy little brown men, dressed in cotton breeches which reached barely to the knee, with their feet bare of the usual sandals, and their black hair tied in queues. Although La Paz is situated in the Andes, as are the other more frequently visited Bolivian cities, the greater portion of this republic lies in the tropical regions of the interior.

As the Yungas Indians tramped through the crowded market streets, the honk of an automobile horn sounded a sharp warning, and a big touring car—one of the few cars that had managed to be imported safely to this distant capital—came tearing past them. The Indians paused, open-mouthed, to stare at the novel sight.

“What makes it run?” one of them demanded—if Mulvaney interpreted correctly.

Their alcalde, or chief, straightened himself with the manner of a superior being, wise in all such things.

“Wind,” he said convincingly.

La Paz is justly called the most colorful capital in South America. Especially on Sunday, when the crowds of Andean Indians in their brilliant ponchos are supplemented by these tropical Indians from the Yungas Valley; when upper-class Bolivians in the latest Parisian or London garb, and priests in their brown, white, or black robes, and soldiers in Prussian uniform, and gringo miners in high boots and flannel shirts, mingle with the whole vari-colored mob; when, jingling llama trains and burros contest the right of way with automobiles and trolley cars—La Paz is a sight never to be forgotten.

The bulk of Bolivia’s population consists of Indians who speak scarcely a word of Spanish. Most of these Indians are Aymarás, a much less docile race than the Quichuas of Peru, and in many respects a much more progressive race. One notes the difference particularly in the *chola* women.

The upper-class *chola* is the most distinctive thing in Bolivia. Unlike the native women anywhere else in South America, she is as neat in her dress as she possibly can be. Her skirts, several in number, are of the finest woolen texture, gay in color, but never clashing in shade. Over her

shoulder she wears two shawls of a material resembling silk, draped most artistically, with long fringe almost sweeping the ground. Upon her head is a distinctive hat of straw, shaped like a derby, but polished with a shellac that makes it shine in the mid-day sun like the dome of a bald-head. Her shoes are high, coming half-way to the knee; they are made of a soft white leather, with high heels that give them a Parisian effect, and a pair of tassels which flap about her ankles to increase this effect. She walks with an independent swing, her hat tilted rakishly upon her black hair, her red cheeks glowing with health, her whole demeanor one of pride, and self-reliance, and independence, and every other good quality lacked by the other natives of the Andes.

The caste system is very pronounced in La Paz. The foregoing description applies only to the highest type of Indian woman. Above her is the Spanish-blooded aristocratic lady, who dresses in the latest style from Paris, and the middle-class Spanish woman, who dresses in black with a mantilla over the head. Below her are several classes of less elegant *chola* women, who wear various combinations of dirty rags after the fashion among the Peruvian Indians. But the high-class *chola* girl is distinctive, and one never ceases to wonder how she has succeeded in rising above the other Indians and how she can afford such fine garments.

She never attempts to mingle with the castes above her, with the Parisian-garbed Spaniards of

the "better" families. To them on Sunday mornings, she leaves the upper side of the plaza, where society, according to Latin custom, gathers after the church service to strut up and down in gala attire, to see and be seen. In most Spanish cities, it is customary on these occasions, for the men to circle the plaza in one direction, while the women circle in the other, the two processions thus passing and repassing continually, and smiling flirtatiously as they pass. In La Paz, a different system is in vogue. The plaza, like everything else in the city, is situated upon a hillside, with one end some fifty feet higher than the other. Since, in this great altitude, walking uphill is an exertion calling for frequent halts for breath, society uses only the upper side of the plaza, walking back and forth upon the one narrow stretch of sidewalk. And since there is more society than sidewalk, this results in a great deal of crowding. The procession of white-colored gentlemen and smartly-dressed women can move but a few steps at a time before congestion occurs; then each couple must pause, with resignation, to wait until the couple ahead moves on. Latin Americans will suffer much inconvenience to gratify their desire to be seen in society.

As my stay in La Paz drew to a close, and I was packing my suit-case preparatory to leaving my hotel, Mulvaney came rushing suddenly into my room.

"Come on," he shouted. "If you're looking for a revolution, come on! I'm not sure it's a



WHERE SOCIETY GATHERS TO STRUT UP AND DOWN



STEAMER ON LAKE TITICACA





revolution, but something's happening outside!"

As we raced for the street, we could hear a tremendous shouting. The plaza before us was filled with Indians, kneeling upon the ground, their heads religiously bared, while they crossed themselves devoutly and stared aloft. Far above us we beheld the cause of the excitement—a tiny speck circling in the blue sky, with a whirring of powerful motors—the first airplane ever seen in La Paz.

For years aviation had failed in Bolivia's capital, because of the extreme altitude. Captain Hudson, the American aviator, however, was now making a first flight, to the joy of the more intelligent Bolivians and to the abject terror of the Indians. When he shut off his motor for a moment, the watching populace screamed aloud that his engine had broken. When the steady whir-r-r began once more, cries of relief arose, and straw hats sailed into the air. As the aviator spiraled downwards toward his landing place on the high plateau above the city, Bolivian youths started to outbid each other for possession of the city's few automobiles, and the road to the aviation field became black with vehicles rushing to welcome him. They bore the young American officer down in triumph, while the leading men of the capital made flowery speeches from the balconies along the line, and all La Paz united in a demonstration of their esteem for Captain Hudson in particular and all Americans in general.

I had come to Bolivia with the fond hope of be-

ing mobbed. Instead, with Red Patterson, Patrick Mulvaney, and the rest of the miners, I was fêted with champagne. The populace organized a torchlight procession, and marched about the principal streets, carrying the whole crowd of us upon their shoulders, Hudson leading with the American Minister, while the rest of us brought up the rear.

On the following morning a local newspaper appeared with startling announcement: "Bolivia now has an aviation section; all we still lack is a navy." Some of the more hotheaded youths began talking war with Peru again, but nothing materialized. And yet some writers would tell us that comic opera has passed out of Latin America! Fortunately it seldom hurts any one. With all the peculiar little duels, and revolutions, and war-scares, Latin America is a far safer place than our own United States, with our lynchings, and riots, and hold-ups, and I would be glad to wager that no city, even in Mexico, has a higher rate of bandit killings than New York. But Latin America is still full of the amusing little incidents which, in our foreign eyes, may be classed as comic opera.

I left La Paz by railway to Arica, in the disputed territory. So barren appeared this strip of coastal desert that I wondered why three republics should keep forever quarrelling about it. Bolivia wants it for a seaport, Peru wants it for sentimental reasons because it once was hers, and Chile wants it because the Chileans are by

nature aggressive and wish to hold that which they have taken by force of arms.

Evidence of Chilean occupation in Arica was apparent. If the Chileans are the most aggressive people on the West Coast, they are also the most progressive. The cleanliness of the port under their jurisdiction was in striking contrast to the filthiness of the Peruvian ports I had seen. And everywhere in the city one ran into Chilean soldiers in the uniform of the famous carabineros, a rather Prussian uniform supplemented with the full equipment of pistol, saber, and carbine. They were splendid-looking soldiers, always snappy in their bearing, and mounted on magnificent horses. Chile could put 250,000 of them into the field, in opposition to Peru's 10,000 potential little soldiers.

The dominating Chilean character was expressed in the inscription upon the statue in the plaza at Arica: "*No solteis el morro!*" or "Don't give up the Morro!" The Morro referred to is an immense rock which commands the harbor like the Rock of Gibraltar, the scene of the fiercest battle in the War of 1879. To-day it bristles with Chilean guns, and the Chilean flag floats over it, while school-children everywhere in Chilean territory (even the Peruvian children in Tacna-Arica) are called to recite: "*No solteis el morro.*"

I have heard it said on the West Coast that the way to distinguish a Chilean from a Peruvian is to slap him in the face. If he steps back, bowing

and says "Excuse me," he's Peruvian. If he gives you a good thrashing, he's Chilean. I know this to be an exaggeration, for when I quoted it many months later in a New York newspaper, every Peruvian in New York city wrote to me, daring me to try it on him.

Yet it does aptly describe the difference between the Indian races from which the common people of these countries are descended. The Peruvian natives are descended from the cowardly Quichuas whom Pizarro defeated with a mere handful of Spanish adventurers; the Chileans from the Araucanians and other war-like tribes whom the Spaniards were never able to conquer. Mining bosses from Peru, accustomed to knock the Indian laborers about at will, are pretty apt to be knifed when they try the same tactics with Chilean laborers. And Peru, although it has justice behind it in its land controversy with Chile, will never be able, even with Bolivian support, to reclaim its lost territory by force of arms.

By the time I landed back in Lima, new developments had occurred up in La Paz.

"Did you hear any rumors of a new revolution while you were in Bolivia?" Griffis inquired.

"Not a word. Everybody seemed disgustingly loyal to the president."

Griffis handed me a telegram just received from La Paz. Four days after my departure, while I was coming by steamer from Arica to Callao, Bautista Saavedra, the editor whose building had

been destroyed by anti-Peruvian mobs, had organized an uprising, overthrown the president, and run him out of town. Bolivia, under Saavedra's new president, was once more anti-Chilean and pro-Peruvian. Again I had just missed seeing a revolution!

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE

UPON my return from Bolivia and Northern Chile, I was summoned to the American Legation in Lima.

"The new Ambassador will be down here in a few days," the *chargé d'affaires* informed me. "My own staff is leaving with me, and there will be no one in the Embassy who is familiar with the city. I'd like you to help us out for a few weeks. You'll only rank as a clerk, of course, but if it will make you feel more important, we'll call you an *attaché*."

Although I had been warned when I first came to Peru that a self-boasted tramp might have difficulty in finding employment, I had been receiving offers of positions on an average of once every month ever since landing. As in the present case, this was due principally to the fact that my name, appearing each week in *The Leader*, had given me a great deal of free publicity, and that any Anglo-Saxon concern in temporary need of another English-speaking clerk, immediately thought of me. I had turned down all the offers, preferring to ramble about as a newspaper correspondent, on a small salary, rather than



settle down to a better-paid but uninteresting position. "Attaché," however, sounded impressive.

William E. Gonzales, the American Ambassador, was a quiet, gray-haired gentleman, whose dignity was tempered by a sense of humor and a fondness for golf. Mrs. Gonzales was one of those charming women, whose tact as a hostess is coupled with a naturalness of manner which can make even a professed tramp feel at ease in the presence of the mighty. Immediately upon their arrival, they leased the finest residence in Lima, and discarded the old legation as unfit for an American Embassy.

I reported to the Ambassador's private secretary.

"So you're the new clerk?"

"Attaché," I corrected him.

He was a young Southerner of about my own age, but he had already seen diplomatic service in all the courts of Europe, and felt a trifle hurt that a self-boasted tropical tramp should enter the corps. Later, however, he proved the best of fellows.

The first task set before me did not appear to require much diplomatic training. The office was being moved from the old Legation to the new Embassy, and while he shipped the furniture from the old place, I was to go down to the new one to see that the moving-men stole none of it en route.

"If any beggars come around, head them off," he advised me. "A new Ambassador is always

pestered with a swarm of people asking contributions to schools and chowder-parties and one thing or another."

I had barely taken charge of the new office when the bell began to ring. My dignity as an attaché was not supposed to be lowered by answering it, but there were no servants in the house yet, and after it had rung for half an hour, I opened the door.

Outside stood a priest. I had just seen several of them going from house to house collecting alms, and was rather annoyed at this disturbance in the machinery of international affairs.

"Here's twenty cents," I said. "It's all the small change I have."

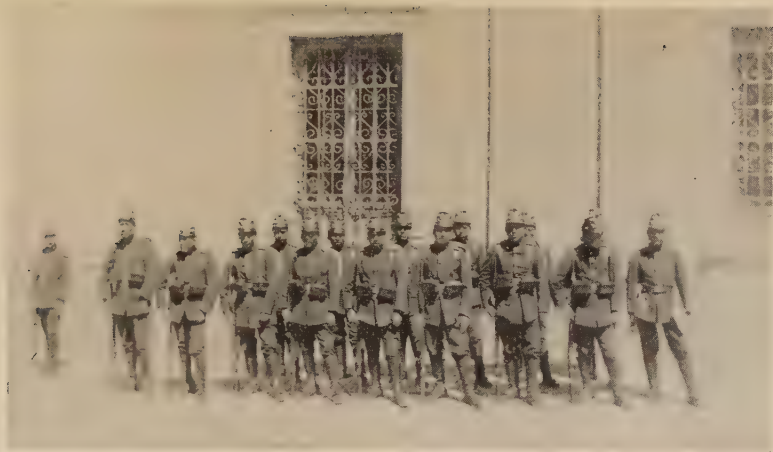
Instead of taking it, he turned his back and walked away. I was pondering on his peculiar behavior when the telephone rang. Albes, the Ambassador's secretary, was calling me.

"Say, Foster, if the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps calls there, you-all can take him to the hotel where the Ambassador is stopping."

"All right."

"You know him, don't you? He's the Papal Nuncio. In any of these Catholic countries the Pope's Ambassador is the high muck-a-muck among the diplomats. You'll recognize him. He dresses like a priest."

I vowed that the next diplomat who called would not be offered twenty cents. When the doorbell rang again, I hastened to admit a tall,



BOLIVIAN SOLDIERS TRAINED BY GERMANS AND WEARING GERMAN  
UNIFORMS



PERUVIAN MACHINE GUNNERS



aristocratic-looking Peruvian in Prince Albert coat and walking-stick.

"I regret most exceedingly that his Excellency, the Ambassador of the United States of America, is not in the Embassy at present, but it will give me the greatest pleasure to escort you to his hotel," I said with a deep bow.

"Thank you, señor, you are most kind."

I hailed a passing taxicab. As we reached the hotel, I suddenly realized that in all my rambling around Peru, I had never had to make a formal introduction and glanced hastily in the back of my pocket dictionary among the "Useful Phrases" to find the formula. Evidently in my haste I looked at the wrong one, for I ushered the gentleman into the Ambassador's presence with the Spanish equivalent of:

"Sir, I have the honor to present you with this trifling birthday gift."

The aristocratic-looking gentleman seemed to be startled at this announcement, but the Ambassador bowed. I discovered for the first time that his own Spanish was somewhat limited, despite his Spanish name.

"Ask him what he wants," directed the Ambassador.

I did so. The gentleman fussed nervously with his cane.

"Why, the students of the University of San Marcos are giving an amateur bullfight next Sunday, and I came to see whether his Excellency

would care to make some contribution toward the expenses.”

But fortunately, as I said before, the Ambassador had a sense of humor.

I remained at the Embassy for two months, and found the duties no more arduous than my duties in the mining camp or upon the reportorial staff of *The Leader*. Diplomacy was not difficult in Peru. The Peruvian government, which considered the United States its particular friend, was most desirous of preserving American goodwill, and hastened to accede to any requests the Ambassador might make. If some port official in Callao unjustly imprisoned the cook on an American steamer for licking a native thief caught in the ship's galley, the quiet, gray-haired Ambassador wrote a letter to the President—a very polite, mild letter which merely stated the facts of the case and asked for an investigation,—and immediately would come a reply from Señor Leguia, stating that the cook had been released and the port captain discharged from office. After the manner of Latin-American dictators, President Leguia personally handled all the reins of government in Peru, and being an unusually capable and efficient and pro-American dictator, he handled the Ambassador's requests promptly.

During my travels, I had heard frequent complaints from my fellow-countrymen about our consular and diplomatic service, frequently voiced in the remark: “Whenever I really need help of any kind, I pose as an Englishman and go to the



British consul. Great Britain protects her subjects." Personally, since I had always received the most courteous treatment from our consuls, this remark always aroused my ire. Certainly it did not apply to the officials in Peru.

If Ambassador Gonzales erred at all, it was upon the side of helping Americans too readily. Once, when he was about to raise a row because Peruvian officialdom had been molesting an American saloon-keeper in Callao, he discovered just in time that the man had been running a disorderly resort where sailors were drugged, knocked on the head, and relieved of their money.

The Peruvians, on the whole, are such a mild-mannered race that few gringos got into trouble save through their own misconduct. Many cases came to our attention of losses through petty thievery or graft, but thievery and graft, while encountered in abundance throughout Latin America, are by no means limited to Latin America. When a foreigner suffered violence in Peru, it was generally at the hands of some fellow countryman, and caused no international difficulty. Yet quarrels, even among the miners and railroad men who formed the greater part of the American population in Peru, were surprisingly infrequent. Many of the "roughnecks," while they seldom carried guns, had one packed away among their belongings, yet during my many months of knocking about the country, I heard of only one actual shooting affair.

In the Embassy I saw little of the tropical

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tramps, save when some old-timer from Morocah, in Lima for his two weeks' vacation, met me on the street and dragged me into a café to meet his cronies and talk over old times. Each tramp seemed to know every other tramp in Latin America, from Texas to Patagonia, and whenever two of them met by accident, they always exchanged gossip.

"I hear Red Patterson's comin' to Lima. I haven't seen Red since we beat it out of Iquique that night we cleaned up the police force. Bill McGovern was with us that night. Wonder where Bill is now?"

"Bill McGovern? I ain't seen him since he blew into the Madeira-Mamore office over in Brazil. He'd hiked across from Cochabamba, an' blew in with nothin' but his trowsers and shirt. The boss give 'im a job, but he held out for some ready cash. 'What d'ye want money for?' says the boss. 'I got to buy a hat,' says Bill. 'I'll give ye a hat,' says the boss. 'Well,' says Bill, 'I got to buy a shirt.' 'I'll give ye a shirt,' says the boss. 'Oh, hell,' says Bill, 'You know what I want. Give me the price of a drink.' Bill's a good scout. Red's runnin' around now with Mulvaney, I understand."

"Yeh. I ain't seen Mulvaney since the grasshopper plague in Costa Rice. We had a job together sprinklin' bug-juice on the railroad track. Grasshoppers was so thick the trains couldn't run, Ate so many bananas the fruit company near went out of business. You couldn't

go out without gettin' covered with 'em."

So the gossip continued.

For the most part in Lima I met men who were less interesting as characters, but usually more cultured as companions. The average American resident in Lima was a man of refinement and education, and if I give him less attention in my narrative than I give the "roughneck," it is because he appealed less to my love of the unusual. During my two months in the Embassy I met but one man who could be termed unusual, and he was decidedly so. It was Dr. George Winthrop Lesser, M. A., F. R. G. S., and other degrees.

Dr. Lesser's introduction to the Embassy was typical of the man himself. It came in the form of a telegram, dispatched from some port up the coast, addressed to "His Excellency, the Ambassador of the United States of America," and marked "Strictly confidential."

It looked so important that Albes glanced up from his desk, vaguely wondering what tremendous new diplomatic problem was about to interrupt the peace and quiet of our office. He broke open the envelope, read the contents, and drawled in his South-Carolina voice:

"You-all just listen to this:

*"Am suffering inconvenience and annoyance from arrest and detention here. Am American citizen of highest standing, friend of Bill Taft, colleague of Warren Harding, and boyhood chum of Charley Hughes. Am charged with non-payment of hotel bill. Kindly use your offices in my behalf. Dr. G. W. Lesser."*

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"Huh!" he concluded. "He sends it to us 'collect.' "

We searched through a convenient volume of "Who's Who," but its compilers had somehow overlooked Dr. Lesser. The Ambassador was not greatly impressed, either, yet since it was his policy to inquire fully into the case of every American in trouble, he directed us to write the President about it, and our letter to Señor Leguia brought the following response:

*"This government has investigated the case of your esteemed compatriot, Dr. G. W. Lesser, and learns that the man sailed yesterday for Callao, having been released from prison upon his payment of the two dollars and fifteen cents due his hotel proprietor."*

"Well," said Albes, "I reckon that'll be about all from Dr. Lesser."

But Albes was unduly optimistic. On the following morning a dilapidated hack stopped before the Embassy. Our building fronted squarely upon the sidewalk of Lima's principal thoroughfare, and through the open windows of the outer office a voice was plainly audible—a high-pitched nasal voice, raised in altercation with the cabman. The language was Spanish, but the voice was unmistakably Yankee.

"No, sir, you can't overcharge me just because I'm an American. I've been in Lima before. I know the proper charge."

Thereupon sounded a torrent of more fluent Castilian, evidently from the *cochero*, affirming

that he was not overcharging his passenger, and threatening to call a policeman.

"Call him! Call him!" shrilled the nasal voice. "Do you think any policeman can arrest me? If you don't know who I am, just step into the Embassy and ask the Ambassador. Ask the First Secretary. Ask all the secretaries. Ask the servants. Here's fifty centavos. Good day."

Our door-bell sounded loudly and imperatively, and before any one could answer it, in walked Dr. G. W. Lesser. He proved to be a man of some forty years of age, tall and angular, with a lean face topped by graying hair. From under a pair of immense shell-rimmed glasses his nose protruded aggressively, as though ready to poke itself into anybody's private office, but his retreating chin and nervous mouth suggested that this same aggressive organ would be hastily withdrawn if it encountered very serious opposition.

Albes and myself surveyed him critically. The man's clothes marked him as an old-timer in the tropics, but they did not indicate the affluence which might be expected of one who boasted such a distinguished clientele of friends. The suit was of Palm Beach cloth, worn threadbare, and the hat, now wrinkled beyond classification, had probably at some remote time been describable as a Panama. Lesser's greatest pretense at dignity consisted in a heavy cane of bull's horn.

"I'm Dr. Lesser," he announced impressively.



“Dr. George Winthrop Lesser. You received my telegram, no doubt?”

“No doubt,” said Albes, unimpressed. “You owe us three pounds and sixty centavos charges on it.”

Dr. Lesser seemed to regard this detail as irrelevant.

“It was a most aggravating affair,” he said. “One of those hotel-keeping robbers wanted to take advantage of me because I was an American. I didn’t mind the price, of course; it was the principle of the thing. Because I *am* an American, I will not be victimized. Is the Ambassador in his office?”

He casually placed his hat and cane upon a desk.

“Yes,” drawled Albes, “but if that’s all you want to see him about, you-all can talk to me about it.”

Dr. Lesser’s face darkened with annoyance at this effrontery of a mere secretary. We both felt that he was making a mental note of Albes’ conduct to be used in his next letter to friends in Washington.

“I wish to speak to the Ambassador about questions of international importance. If you would like to see my credentials—”

Reaching into an inner pocket, he suddenly displayed a sheaf of testimonials, signed by everybody from General Pershing to Elihu Root. And as we stared at him in amazement, he turned back the lapel of his coat, disclosing a badge. It did look suspiciously like the tin medals awarded



by correspondence schools with the sixteenth lesson on finger-printing, but after seeing those testimonials, we dared not question its authority.

"I suppose you both know what that means," said Lesser.

Neither of us did, yet we both nodded mechanically. We felt that we ought to have known.

"I guess the head of the Latin-American section of the U. S. Secret Service is entitled to see the Ambassador, isn't he?" Lesser concluded, and before we could stop him, he had marched past us into Mr. Gonzales' private office.

After several minutes he emerged again, and draped himself across Albes' desk with the evident intention of favoring us with more conversation.

"Decent sort of chap, the Ambassador," he began. "Tickled to death to see me."

"Here's your hat," said Albes, pointedly.

Dr. Lesser accepted the battered relic.

"Interesting hat," he remarked. "This is the hat I wore when I was consul at Vera Cruz. You remember the occasion when our marines invaded Vera Cruz because the Mexicans wouldn't salute our flag?"

Albes nodded, bored.

"I was the man who demanded that salute." He accepted the cane which Albes now proffered him. "This stick also has a history. It's made from the horns of the bulls killed in the ring at Mexico City."

Albes glared at him.

"Did you kill them yourself?" he inquired.

Dr. Lesser nodded.

"But, of course, that was years ago when I was a young fellow like yourself—before I made my mark. I couldn't do it now. Dignity and all that. How Bill Taft would chuckle if he knew I had been a matador!"

"I'll bet he would," said Albes.

"Well," said Dr. Lesser, evidently displeased with our lack of enthusiasm, "I must be going."

"Three pounds and sixty centavos," reminded Albes.

Dr. Lesser frowned with annoyance.

"Oh, yes, yes, I meant to speak about that. I wanted to ask you to keep that on your books for a few days. Until I can reach my alligator farm in Venezuela, or my silver mines in Chile, I'll be a trifle hard-pressed. I neglected them during the war, you know—I was a dollar a year man in Washington, and I've been financially embarrassed ever since. But I'll get that money for you, as soon as I begin to draw my pay from the Peruvian Intelligence office. The Ambassador is recommending me for a very important position. Of course, I'll be pretending to work for Peru, but all the time I'll be getting dope for our own government."

To our surprise, the Ambassador did send us out a letter, introducing Lesser to President Leguia. It did not recommend him for the important position of which he had spoken, but it did state that he was competent to transcribe

Spanish into English, and that he wished employment with the Peruvian government.

Lesser, however, when I ran into him a few hours later at a restaurant, informed me that this was only a "blind," and that he was now second in importance to Leguia himself.

"No one suspects it," he explained. "Everything is secret. I just occupy an unimportant-looking desk in the government office. When Leguia wants me, he just presses a button. No bell rings—nothing crude like that—but the pen-wiper on my desk flaps up and down. I go through the underground passage to his chamber, open the sliding panel in the wall—"

He continued at great length, giving me the most astounding account of the secrecy attendant upon his visits to the presidential chamber. Then he swore me to silence. It was not long, however, before I discovered that he had told the same story, with variations, to every other American in Lima, swearing each to silence as he had sworn me. Secrecy was not Lesser's strong suite. At the café where I took lunch with several young vice-consuls, Lesser took the seat of honor at our table, officially christened it the "American table," replaced our modest bouquet with a silk flag, and complained loudly because the orchestra did not play "Yankee Doodle."

When Albes and I reported the man's behavior to the Ambassador, Mr. Gonzales was greatly surprised. Lesser, he said, had come to him quietly to ask for the letter of introduction. If

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Lesser had shown us letters from General Pershing and Elihu Root, they were probably forged. I was commissioned to go out and gather further information about the man.

From my experience on *The Leader* I had learned that the best news source in Lima was the American Bar. To this establishment came all the miners on vacation from Cerro de Pasco, and all the travelers who stopped in Lima. If a man had ever spent much time anywhere on the West Coast, there was sure to be some one in this place who knew his record.

"Does anybody here know anything about Dr. Lesser?" I asked.

Morris, the proprietor, made it a point never to discuss personalities, but his gesture was expressive. He placed his thumbs behind his head and wiggled his fingers with a circular motion.

"Ask Red Patterson," he suggested.

But Red, who had now reached Lima, and was still celebrating his inheritance in company with Mulvaney, was not in a condition to discuss any question seriously.

"You mean George Washington Lesser, D. S. C., and X. Y. Z., and C. O. D.?" he chuckled, swaying slightly and grasping the bar-rail for support. "Sure, 'e's the fellow what wrote the Declaration of Independence, composed the Lord's prayer, an' invented the victrola. 'E's a great man."

Other contributions of opinion, however, were more helpful.

"We all know him," said Glen, the tall Canadian cashier from the Smelter. "He's the fellow that makes up all sorts of fancy degrees and prints them behind his name. He worked under me at the Smelter ten years ago, and he was such a nuisance, I kicked him out. He's the biggest liar in Peru, with the possible exception of present company."

"Thanks," said Red Patterson gratefully.

"He worked under me at the oil fields," spoke up another acquaintance of my newspaper days. "When we fired him, we found his desk full of maps and plans of the works. The real Secret Service got after him, thinking he was a German spy, but they decided he was only a lunatic. He thinks he's a detective. Biggest lunatic on the West Coast."

"'E's a great man," protested Red, still swaying against the bar. "When 'e drinks a toast to William Jennings Bryan, 'e's got sense enough to let me pay for the drink. 'E's no lunatic."

"But how does he live?" I demanded.

"Oh, he gets jobs now and then. When he gets fired, he beats it out of town and leaves the rest of the American colony to pay his bills."

"'E's a great man," Red maintained, a broad grin on his freckled face. "'E and Betsy Ross made the first flag. 'E's the only man Mary Pickford ever really loved."

When the Ambassador heard my report, he wrote a second note to President Leguia, explaining the man's character, and apologizing for his

haste in sending such a man to the Peruvian government.

Two days later Dr. Lesser bade us farewell at the American table.

“Been fired?” asked Albes, heartlessly.

“Fired? No indeed! When I told Leguia I was going, he went down on his knees to me. He begged me to stay. ‘George,’ said he, ‘we need you here. We simply can’t get along without you.’ But I have my own interests to attend to—my alligator farm in Venezuela and my silver mines in Chile. After all, I must consider myself.”

Later he drew me aside.

“Can you lend me three pounds until I’m on my feet again?”

I knew I would never see the money, but as story material, I thought he was worth it.

We did not hear from him again for several weeks. Then a prospector in Morris’ Bar brought news that he had last seen Lesser on a mule, headed in the general direction of Bolivia. He was claiming relationship to Thomas A. Edison and Henry Ford, and had been commissioned by the National Geographic Society—so he said—to measure the altitudes of all the mountain peaks in the Andes.



## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### THE FOURTH OF JULY IN LIMA

**M**Y position at the Embassy gave me a longed-for opportunity to observe the life of a Latin-American city. I had already seen the life at the big Anglo-Saxon construction camps, but except for a day or two at a time, between trips for *The Leader*, I had never lived in Lima.

I found myself a room in the middle-class residential district, on one of the narrow streets lined with typical one-story or two-story Moorish houses, with the family of a Peruvian gentleman who held some poorly paid but highly respected position in a local bank. His family, like most Peruvian families, numbered about thirty. When a man marries in Spanish countries, he assumes unlimited obligation to take care of his wife's relatives down to the fifteenth cousin, and thus my host had gradually gathered about him a nondescript collection of discarded maiden aunts, assorted grandmothers, cousins, nephews, nieces, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, and various other adjuncts of Peruvian family life, all of whom had come to share his roof and spend his meager salary. Yet he took his lot philosophi-

cally, as a family provider should, and managed somehow to wear the traditional white wing-collar and the chaste black necktie and perfectly creased trousers which marked him as a true son of Lima's aristocracy.

They seemed overjoyed at the honor of having a diplomatic attaché in the house, made me welcome with the heart-warming hospitality which is the Peruvian's chief virtue, and gave me the best room in the establishment. It was a most unusual room for Lima in that it was connected with a bath, and even more unusual in that the bath was in working order. Also the room had a splendid location upon the street. From my balcony I could view three pretty *señoritas* in the house opposite, four in the house next to theirs, two more in the house beyond, and so on down the street as far as I could see without falling off the balcony.

And from this strategic location, I learned much about Lima's social customs. The ambition of the average Latin-American girl is to marry a gringo. Experience and observation have taught her that while he may not woo her so eloquently in the courting stage, he is more apt to confine his attentions to her after marriage. As I was the only gringo in the community my balcony became a center of attraction in the neighborhood.

This was not due, I explain modestly, to my own personal charm, but to the fact that my room, being remote from the Embassy and the

Consulate, became a rendezvous for the younger members of the diplomatic and consular service.

The Spanish *señorita*, however, is not nearly so devilish as she is usually portrayed upon our stage or in our fiction. In real life, on the contrary, she is as modest and timid as can be found anywhere. Custom keeps her on the balcony or behind a barred window, and if she smiles frequently, it is because she is making use of the one means at her disposal for flirtation.

When she ventures upon the street, she must run the gauntlet of the amorous gaze from the young Peruvians who line the sidewalk, each of whom will remark aloud, "You're a little beauty!" or some similar compliment. As she is very susceptible to flattery, this pleases rather than offends her, but she pretends not to hear it, and passes with lowered head. If she meets a man of her acquaintance upon the street, she must wait for him to speak first, and then must answer with only the iciest of nods, lest her reputation be irretrievably lost.

When a young man calls upon her, the evening is dampened by the presence of half a dozen grandmothers and maiden aunts. If he calls upon her twice, her parents may consider it a declaration of serious intentions, and so he usually doesn't. Instead, he prefers to stand outside her barred window, or walk up and down beneath her balcony.

For this form of courtship, an introduction is not always necessary. One evening a youth who

had been passing and repassing with lovesick countenance beneath a balcony across the way from my room stopped and poured out his sentiments as follows:

“Oh, you exquisite creature, you are so wonderfully beauteous that it is sacrilege for me to address you, but—”

The balcony was rather high, and he had to raise his voice. He continued the self-styled sacrilege for several minutes, all in the same tone both of voice and subject-matter, until the assembled young diplomats and vice-consuls in my room went out on our balcony and hurled fruit at him.

Despite the predatory attitude of the Latin-American males, and its resulting necessity for extreme modesty of deportment on the part of the girls, the Peruvian young women usually dress in the latest Parisian fashion. One sees shorter skirts and more silk stockings in Lima than on Fifth Avenue or Broadway, New York.

The young women show rather good taste in this respect, for the Latin-American girl is ideally designed for the wearing of silk stockings. One never sees an angular woman in Lima. They are sometimes a little too plump, particularly as they advance in age, and the older ladies show a tendency to grow bluish-black mustachios on the upper lip, but in their youth they are charming.

They reach womanhood at a very early age, and frequently when only twelve years old they look like mature women, small perhaps, but perfect. At this age, with dresses reaching only half-way

to the knees, they look immodest. An Anglo-Saxon child of similar years would never be noticed, but these fully-developed little ladies make a visitor feel that the Winter Garden chorus is passing in review.

Those of us who judge Latin-American beauty by the few girls who come to New York can not appreciate it. In our climate, their native olive-tint of complexion becomes sallow and noticeably dark, and the large eyes seem to lose their luster. One should see the Spanish girl in her own country, particularly on Sunday, when she goes to church dressed in black, with a tiny lace mantilla upon her head. Then she is so strikingly beautiful that one can scarcely blame the males for admiring her, although their habit of admiring her aloud fills an American with a chivalrous desire to punch a few of them.

Of the young men who regularly "played the bear" on the street where I lived, the most persistent were the Peruvian army officers in their snappy French uniforms. Whenever a group of them appeared, strutting along the side-walk with their swagger sticks, the timid young ladies of the neighborhood always drew back until only their eyes peeped over the balcony rail. I could always tell when a regular devil was approaching, by observing the withdrawal of the modest *señoritas*.

The Indian servant maids, who occupied the doors opening onto the street, usually held their ground, however, appearing rather flattered at



the attentions of the young officers, who, despite their grand manner, are not averse to little affairs with the Indian class. One of the serving maids in my own house had her particular admirer, a fat brown *cholo*, who every evening came and lounged on the sidewalk before her door. Whenever she opened it a few inches, he would make a rush, but she always managed to close and bolt it in time to giggle at him through the keyhole.

The girl who thus amused herself bore the name of Maria de la Concepcion. The *cholo* boy who swept out my room every morning and brought me my coffee and bread at daybreak bore the still more sacred name of Jesus. Both these titles, and others similar, are considered quite fitting in Latin America. In fact, when in traveling for *The Leader*, I once inspected a prison roster, I found that every inmate with one exception was named after a saint, suggesting that Peruvian parents are over-optimistic when christening their children.

Lima, with its many churches, is apparently a very religious city. At least every two weeks a holy-day is celebrated, the entire business section being closed for one day, or sometimes for three, while the population joins in parading images of saints about the streets. The most vivid mental picture which the visitor to Lima carries away with him is that of a long procession of priests, followed by hundreds of the devout, marching impressively with lighted candles behind life-sized



statues of the Virgin, through narrow Moorish streets lined with mantilla-covered girls and bare-headed men.

Yet the Peruvians are as superficial in their religion as in everything else. These same holidays are invariably regarded as occasions for drinking, and although the saloons and cafés are theoretically closed on such days, by nightfall the *cholos* and *peons* are all staggering home in the same rum-sotted condition as their brothers in the Andean mining regions.

Religion and personal morals seem to have little relationship in the Latin countries. It is commonly remarked that the most devout people in Lima are the prostitutes, who are always to be seen in the vanguard of the religious procession. In fact, I heard of one well-authenticated instance where a house of prostitution, on the evening before Good Friday, suspended business long enough for girls and guests to receive communion. As one passes these places on the street—and one is apt to pass them on the most unexpected street—the view through the opened window frequently discloses among the red furnishings a wall lined with pictures of the saints. Yet the Peruvians see nothing absurd or sacrilegious in these inconsistencies.

There seems to be no particular segregated district in Lima. The resorts are scattered all over town in small groups, and as one strolls through a street which he supposes to be respectable, he is quite apt to stumble upon a row of

windows lined with alluring-eyed females of all ages and descriptions, from fourteen to forty, who murmur a soft "*Buenas noches*" as he passes. Those who recognize him as an Englishman or American will call out, in a manner quite different from the modest manner of their respectable sisters:

"Hello! You likee me? Me likee you. What-nahell? No likee me? You be damn!"

Across from the same windows will be a row of private homes, of respectable middle-class families, whose children and young girls line the balconies, interestedly watching the success or failure of the sirens across the street. Consequently the *señoritas* of good family, while modest in their own deportment, are fully sophisticated. And naturally, when a girl is suddenly left without the guardianship of her family, in a city where the lone girl is not an object of respect, her tendency is to join the ranks of the fallen. She has never been taught to protect herself; in fact, I doubt that the uneducated middle-class girl, brought up to rely not upon her own will-power but upon the careful chaperonage of her family, realizes that she is capable of protecting herself.

The Spanish social system in South America encourages immorality, not only in the natives themselves, but also in the young Americans who work in the cities.

Any normal young man craves decent feminine society. In a city like Lima he can not take a girl

to the theater without bringing along chap-erones. If he calls at her house, even if her family does not consider it a formal declaration, he is apt to find it a dull evening. Provided that he is not of the "mushy" disposition, and calls merely to talk, he finds her an uninspiring conversationalist. The limited education which she has received in the convent has not stimulated her interest in literature, and her indolence has kept her from developing her musical talent to any great extent. Her accepted rôle in life is to be petted and admired, and the grandmothers and maiden aunts are usually present to see that she is not petted until after marriage. The only way to hold her attention is to pay her pretty compliments all evening, as do her Latin admirers, but the average American youth, after repeating his one or two phrases about her beauty for two or three hours, is inclined to feel rather foolish.

In the more exclusive families, where the daughters have been educated abroad, one may find the *señoritas* as bright and interesting as any of our Anglo-Saxon young ladies, and here also one may be allowed more freedom from chap-eronage, but the average young American who comes to Lima will not have access into these homes.

The result of the system is obvious. In any Latin-American city, the "dance halls," to describe them charitably, are institutions. It is considered the privilege even of married men to spend their evenings there. So regular is the

patronage in Lima that if any young men climb into a taxicab after 11 P. M., the driver starts immediately without instructions for one of these places. Nine times out of ten the only reason for it is a dearth of other amusements—yet these “dance halls,” like those of our old West, are by no means limited in their facilities merely to drinking, dancing, and looking on.

I do not mean to say that all young Americans who go to South America give way to vice and dissipation. They do not. But a dearth of other amusements sends many of them on occasional visits to the “dance hall,” where they are subject to its influence.

The American colony in Lima was divided into several groups. One clique consisted of the big men, the managers of the big Anglo-Saxon concerns. Most of them were married, and had their families in Lima. The employees of the two or three big commercial houses fell into other cliques, frequently occupying a house together in college fraternity fashion. Another clique included some half-dozen young American or British aviators in the service of the Peruvian government.

All of these groups had their own circle of friends in Lima, and their own amusements, as did the young men of the consular and diplomatic service, and were little tempted by the dance hall. The traveling salesmen, of whom there were always about two dozen in Lima, and the miners on vacation from the Andes, of whom

there were an equal number, found little amusement.

We younger members of the diplomatic and consular service, although we had the entrée into many of the best homes, where the Peruvians had been educated abroad and allowed us to dance and play the piano unmolested by chaperones, were nevertheless frequently bored with the life in Lima, and regretted the limited facilities for amusement. There were two or three clubs to which Americans and Englishmen were admitted, but their membership was comprised mostly of older men, the managers of the big Anglo-Saxon concerns, and the cost of membership was beyond our means. Moving pictures constituted practically the only attraction. Lima boasted of two or three theaters, but they were not always running, and their entertainments were seldom of the first class.

I recall one vaudeville performance which we attended. It was scheduled to commence at 9 P. M., for late hours are the rule in Lima. At 9.30 an orchestra of four pieces appeared, tuned up, smoked several cigarettes, and finally played the overture. Eventually a young woman danced. Between her dances, while she changed her costume, the audience waited. After her act had been completed, there was a formal intermission. Then another young woman appeared to sing. This concluded the performance. Both girls were excellent, yet their actual performance alto-



gether lasted some forty minutes. Owing to the various delays so judiciously arranged by the management, however, it was well after midnight when we left the theater.

Sunday was an exception. Then there were horse-racing and bullfighting. In due time Joselito, the greatest of Spanish *matadors*, came to town, and after seeing him, my opinion of bullfighting improved, although I never learned to enjoy the cruelty to the animals. Joselito was an artist in his gruesome profession. Throughout his work he always gave an impression of unhurried calm, almost of carelessness, sometimes even turning his back upon a charging bull while he nonchalantly lighted a cigarette, yet Joselito knew the psychology of bulls, studied each antagonist carefully, and took these seeming chances only when he knew he could get away with them.

For his six performances, Joselito received his expenses from Spain and return, his expenses while in Lima, where he was given the use of one of the finest mansions in town, the sum of \$50,000 and the proceeds of a special benefit performance, which must have amounted to another \$10,000. It is needless to say that during his sojourn he was the idol of Lima. Months later, when news came to the city that Joselito had been slain by a bull while attempting to save a wounded comrade at a fight in Madrid, all Lima went into mourning.

From time to time I met Hernandez, my friend of the *Mantaro's* steerage, but the coming of Joselito, who brought his own *cuadrilla* of assis-



tants, relegated Hernandez to the side-lines. Each time I met him his clothes were a trifle shabbier than the time before, each time he looked a trifle hungrier and accepted my invitation to lunch a trifle more eagerly. And then came the turning point in his fortunes. He had been given another opportunity in the ring, not as a *matador*, but merely as a *banderillero* or placer of the tinselled darts, when the *matador* was knocked down by one of the bulls. Hernandez, who had stood carelessly by the barrera, without his cloak, leaped to the rescue, seized the raging animal by the horns, and wrestled at the risk of his life, while attendants carried the *matador* to safety. Then, at the instance of the wounded *matador*, Hernandez walked out once more with cloak and rapier and distinguished himself by slaying the bull with one well-placed thrust, winning back the applause and admiration of the fickle multitude as quickly as he had formerly lost it.

Between Sundays, there were few amusements. The young Americans in Lima who did not belong to a clique usually congregated at one of the cafés after dinner, drank because they could think of nothing else to do, and finally tiring of this, would voice the query:

“Well, where do we go from here?”

Thereupon most of them would rise, stretch in a bored manner, and call a taxi. And the taxi-driver took them where he was accustomed to take young men at that hour.

Several times during the two months I spent in the Embassy, I had the opportunity to answer letters from young women at home, who wished to see South America, and wrote to inquire about the opportunities for employment.

The social system makes it a poor place for women. One of the oil camps and several of the larger mining camps employ a few women stenographers, and in a strictly Anglo-Saxon camp their life is not altogether unpleasant, although I have never yet seen a camp where the women didn't all hate each other after a few months of confinement in the isolated community with nothing to talk about except each other. I also met a few American ladies who lived alone in Lima, but they were past the age of molestation.

The trouble is that the Latin, accustomed to the guardianship exercised over the girls of the decent families, supposes that any woman who runs around alone must be of the questionable class. The two unhappiest young women I have ever met were a couple of English girls who had come to Lima to work for a commercial house. Having no guardian, they could not leave their room at night without being insulted by every man they passed.

"Why don't you call a policeman?" I asked.

"We did—once. He insulted us, too."

Those who come down with their husbands must conduct themselves in the extremely modest manner of the Peruvian girls. One of them, who used to join her husband and his friends every

evening at a leading café, was continually followed upon the street when she appeared alone. The fact that her husband's party drank and sometimes became a trifle noisy, even though she herself touched nothing, was sufficient.

An American girl with plenty of long, sharp hatpins may be safe enough, but she is not likely to be happy alone in South America.

As my stay in the mining camp had ended on New Year's Day, so my stay at the Embassy ended appropriately on the Fourth of July.

The Ambassador had planned a mammoth reception to commemorate the day, and the Peruvian government, which never lost an opportunity to show its friendliness toward the United States, volunteered to coöperate, President Leguia sending word that he would attend in person. It was the first time the Chief Executive had honored a foreign Embassy by calling.

The Fourth was an exciting day. From early morning delegations of school children came with bouquets of flowers for Mrs. Gonzales, while their professors made long-winded orations quite as flowery as the bouquets. At noon a battalion of Peruvian soldiers, in the showy zouave costume of the presidential guard, came marching down the principal street and lined up on either side of the doorway with fixed bayonets. This display attracted the crowds for blocks around, until we began to fear that none of the guests could reach the reception.

The preparations were elaborate. In the big

courtyard a military band blared the Peruvian and American national anthems. In the reception hall an orchestra worked itself into a frenzy in the Peruvian interpretation of American jazz music. In the dining hall were a thousand varieties of sandwiches and cake, while in several places huge punch-bowls screamed a cheerful "Welcome!"

It was an open-house affair, with the whole world invited. One of the punch-bowls had been discreetly screened with palms, however, and it became my secretarial duty to watch for undesirable guests from the beachcombing circles of the American colony, and rush them to this particular punch-bowl before they disturbed the decorum of the diplomatic clique.

Among the first to arrive were Red Patterson and Patrick Mulvaney. They came in with surprising timidity, embarrassed at finding themselves among so many "dukes," as Red described the frock-coated diplomats, and were quite content to remain in the close vicinity of the punch-bowl, where Red amused himself by pushing Mulvaney against the marble-topped table, warning him, "Everything's all right! Don't hit nobody!"

Finally loud cheering in the street outside, followed by a clash of arms, told us that the President had arrived. He came in style, in the Peruvian state chariot reserved for such occasions—an old gilded equipage drawn by eight prancing steeds, with four powdered and be-

wigged footmen on top of the coach, and led by an escort of mounted lancers and another brass band. When news of the procession reached the punch-bowl, Red emerged from behind his glass long enough to insist that the Chief Executive was also followed by two batteries of heavy artillery, six armored tanks, and one submarine, **not to mention** a fleet of battleships, but Red's accuracy of observation by this time was in a class with his usual sincerity of purpose as a champion of the truth.

With the coming of the President a horde of photographers invaded the Embassy and began setting off flashlights. President Leguia, although the ablest executive Peru had had in many years, was extremely short, and sensitive about it. Whenever he saw a camera aimed at him, he tried to get away from the vicinity of the Ambassador's wife, who topped him by eighteen inches, but his efforts were in vain. Flashlights went off from all directions until the Embassy became so full of fumes that most of us had to retire to the back yard for breath.

Yet, in spite of these difficulties, the reception was a brilliant affair, and every one voted it a complete success, even Red and his fellows, whom the Ambassador's foresight had relegated to the background. Afterwards, I have a hazy recollection of a banquet at Lima's leading restaurant, at which Americans and Peruvians mixed "Hurra's" with "Vivas!"

When that was satisfactorily completed, several



of us adjourned to another café. We were just in time. The husband whose wife sometimes accompanied him there had just punched a Peruvian in the nose for attempting to kiss her. Immediately bottles began to fly through the air in a perfect barrage. Americans pitched in to help the husband; Peruvians pitched in to help the other fellow. In an instant all the toasts of eternal friendship were forgotten. I had carried a cane throughout my travels, clinging to it through a sense of humor when I had no other possession to cling to, but its destruction was in a good cause.

The battalion of zouaves, returning from the Embassy, put an end to the fracas. After we had calmed down, a Peruvian arose, glass in hand.

“My apologies, gentlemen. Here’s to the United States.”

“Here’s to Peru,” we responded.

It was a glorious Fourth.



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### INTO THE JUNGLE WITH MISSIONARIES

**T**HE more one wanders in the tropics, the stronger grows the call of the wanderlust. After I had been in the Embassy in Lima for two months, it called me.

Griffis, of *The Leader*, was its mouthpiece. He came to me with the announcement that two of the high officials of a Protestant Missionary society were organizing an expedition to cross overland through the little traveled Amazonian jungles to Brazil. A Peruvian cabinet minister of his acquaintance had offered to send them through the wilderness with the fortnightly mail train which carried letters to Iquitos, and had invited Griffis to send me along at the government's expense to write up the expedition for *The Leader*.

Several months earlier, on my trip to the Chanchamayo, I had seen the beginning of the Pichis Trail by which the party planned to travel—a tiny footpath that wound eastward through an otherwise unbroken jungle—and to an adventure-seeker it had looked inviting. So I resigned my position as attaché.

The Tropical Tramps in Lima were loud in their disapproval.

“Well,” said Mulvaney, “I never thought you’d sink so low as to run around with missionaries.”

Only Red Patterson defended me.

“Shut up!” he told the other habitués of Morris’ Bar. “’E’s a fine little Christian gentleman. If it wasn’t for me own business interests—me alligator farm in Venezuela or me silver mines in Chile and me detective work in the Peruvian Secret Service—I’d go along meself an’ preach the gospel to the cannibals.”

It was with both reluctance and relief that I left the tramp fraternity. They were rough-necks, most of them, they didn’t care a hang whether they ever amounted to anything in life so long as they found adventure and enjoyment, their personal habits and morals would not have passed a very strict censorship, yet any one of them would have shared his last cent with a comrade in distress or given his last drop of blood to rescue a comrade in trouble. Their failings—their roughness, their lack of ambition and morality—they redeemed by a similar lack of hypocrisy; openly admitting their vices without any pretense, they told the world to go to blazes.

My new traveling companions, however, were not of the type which the term “missionary” is apt to conjure up in the mind of the uninitiated. The Rev. Dr. Oliver was over six feet in height and proportionately broad, with a cheerful, ruddy countenance; only his scholarly precision in

speech marked him as a minister. The Rev. Mr. Herbert, his younger companion, was not quite so large, but his muscles suggested a youth spent upon the farm, and he carried the second largest revolver in Peru, second only to the one which I purchased for the journey, a huge relic of frontier days which, knowing my inaccurate marksmanship, I had selected for its moral effect.

For the last time I ascended the picturesque Central Railway, motored to Tarma in Turk's automobile, hired several of Flying Fannie's relatives, rode down through the Chanchamayo Valley to spend another night with old Don Victor, and set out on the long overland trip to the Amazon. Beyond the Perené Colony, where the Pichis Trail commenced, our little *cholo* guide let the pack mule come to a willing halt, while he turned back to address us.

"From this point," he said in Spanish, "it is better that one of the *señores* who is armed take the lead."

Years ago the Peruvian government built this trail through the wilderness to the headwaters of canoe navigation, and having built it, after the manner of Latin-American governments, forgot it. The tropical forest, growing faster than the native road-workers could cut it down, had closed in upon it, while the torrential downpours of many rainy seasons had coated its infrequent cobblestones with moss and deepened the swamp-holes between.

## 216 The Adventures of a Tropical Tramp

Possibly once or twice a month a half-breed driver might cross the lonely road with a trio of little rat-colored mules, carrying mail from the West Coast to the Amazonian port of Iquitos; once or twice a year some butterfly-chasing naturalist from an American university might pass that way in search of specimens; otherwise, there was practically no traffic upon this little-traveled route, and we felt like explorers visiting a new land. Yet this trail was the best of several paths across tropical South America. Modernity and civilization, like tourist and traveling salesmen, had followed the coastline in their invasion of the southern continent; the interior, particularly between the Andes and the Amazon, had barely been touched.

We followed our guide's advice, although there seemed little reason for the precaution. The endless glades of fern and palm were silent save for the hum of insects or the infrequent chirping of invisible birds. At times, where the trail emerged upon a sunny cliff, we saw only a sea of hills stretching away in forrested billows to the misty horizon. During an entire day's ride we saw but one human being, a tiny Chuncho boy, who appeared as though by magic as we were cooking our lunch upon the trail. He could not have been more than eight years old, but he wore the friar-like robe of his tribe, and his little brown face was streaked red with achiote seed.

"Where did you come from?" demanded the Rev. Mr. Herbert in surprise.

Certainly he had not been standing there when we made camp, nor had we heard him approach. He just appeared.

The boy answered our questions only with a shy smile. Spanish was equally ineffective. He merely smiled again, remaining to watch us with curiosity quite unmixed with fear. He was dark of skin, and his features were almost girlish beneath his long black hair. When lunch was prepared, we offered him some, but he shook his head silently. When we had resaddled the mules and started on our journey, he stood there looking after us, like a little brown statue.

But we had another surprise. An hour later, when we were watering the animals at a brook, four kilometers distant, the same child stepped out from a cane thicket beside the stream and grinned at us. Evidently he was playing at stalking us.

"Well, well," said Dr. Oliver. "I trust his elder relatives will refrain from indulgence in the same amusement."

The realization that we were beyond the protection of the Peruvian government and that in case some wandering band of Chunchos should take a fancy to our mules and equipment we must rely upon ourselves for self-defense was rather pleasing. After all, there is a thrill which comes with making one's way over a difficult and dangerous trail, a satisfaction with one's self, a primitive joy of self-reliance, which the city-dweller never experiences. I have never felt quite so



fully satisfied with life in general as when making my way over such a trail.

At sunset we came out into a little clearing, in the center of which stood a *tambo*, or inn, built of cane and roofed with palm-thatch—the first of a string of similar resting places established by the Peruvian government for the convenience of the fortnightly mail train.

An army of black pigs snorted a chorus of welcome as we emerged from the woods, and the half-breed inn-keeper came running from the house in great excitement, followed by more pigs, to welcome us. Did he have a vacant room? Ha, ha, *señores*, his rooms were always vacant. This proved to be a slight misstatement, for the room to which he escorted us was filled with a further assortment of black pigs.

The dinner which his Indian wife set before us, however, was good. The Peruvian government had not only stipulated the prices which he might charge, but had ordained that each meal should consist of three separate courses. Our proprietor was conforming strictly to regulations. The first course was rice, mixed with soup. The second course was rice, this time accompanied by a few beans. And the third course was rice, unaccompanied.

Yet I had expected to fare much worse, as I had already fared in parts of Latin America less removed from civilization. Even when rice gives out, as it frequently does in this little-traveled country, the yucca root which forms the staple



diet among the Indians is not at all bad. When boiled, it rather resembles the sweet potato; when fried, it is not unlike toast. Even the bulbous root of the coladium, or "elephant ear," which is similarly utilized as a vegetable in this region, is quite palatable.

Our only difficulty was in persuading the housewife to omit the brilliant red achiote seed from her menu. This red berry, used by the Chunchos in staining their faces, is also used by the native cooks to give a colorful effect to the dishes, not because it adds to the flavor, but because it appeals to the primitive love of brilliant color. When we protested against vermilion shade rice, our housewife was greatly surprised, and must have considered us decidedly inartistic in our taste.

After a night spent upon comfortable but unpretentious cots of burlap stretched across log frames, we awoke at Yapaz to discover that Vicente, our *cholo* boy, had already saddled and packed the mules, a most surprising discovery to one who has traveled in Latin America.

Vicente was an exceptionally bright youth, in a region where the half-breeds are noted mainly for an extraordinary stupidity and an insatiable craving for rum and coca-leaves. He had just celebrated his twentieth birthday on the road, and in the village of La Merced, in the Chanchamayo Valley, we had tendered him a dinner and made him a substantial present.

Vicente had a system whereby he could answer

every question that a newcomer to the region might ask. Dr. Oliver, who had a scholarly thirst for information, would turn in the saddle at frequent intervals to demand in unscholarly Spanish:

“*Come se llama* this river or *rio aqui* or whatever-you-call-it?”

Vicente would answer brightly.

“This is the river of St. Peter.”

Everything we passed seemed to have a religious name. This was not surprising, however, in Latin America, where even a bar-room is apt to be called “The Bar-Room of the Twelve Holy Apostles.”

But when, on the Pichis Trail, we passed in rapid succession St. John’s Creek, St. James’ hill, and St. Paul’s waterfall, and saw some St. Michael caterpillars crawling up a St. Ann’s palm tree, we began to doubt Vicente’s sincerity as geographer and naturalist.

“What’s that thing he has in his hand?” inquired Herbert.

Dr. Oliver looked at it.

“It’s a pocket edition of the Saints’ Calendar.”

We traveled in comfort that second day, for the road was better, and at noon instead of camping, we came to another *tambo* where the rice was already cooked and awaiting us. A combined telegraph and telephone wire runs along this part of the trail, and the engineer in charge of the road, whom we had met back in Tarma, had warned all hotel-keepers of our coming. The

hotel-keepers were also making it a practice to call each other up partly to assure themselves that we had not been killed by Indians, which seemed an unnecessary precaution to us, and partly to gossip about us. At night we stopped at the best hotel on the road, distinguished as such by its floor of real boards. The other inns had floors either of mud or of split bamboo. Also the *tambo* at Eneñez had imported rose bushes in its front yard instead of ordinary jungle.

We happened to stop there on the birthday of the landlady's little daughter. This was a peculiar coincidence, for at the *tambo* where we had taken lunch that noon, it had been the birthday of the landlady's little son. Having made the little boy a present of one of our few remaining bars of chocolate, we could not well neglect the little girl.

On the road the next morning, we caught Vicente nibbling on something that looked suspiciously like chocolate. Evidently he was eating his commission.

The Rev. Dr. Oliver shook his head.

"I thought somebody was responsible for this epidemic of birthdays."

We were now descending rapidly toward the Amazonian lowlands. The road was becoming worse; the mud holes were growing deeper. The forest was the same, but the knowledge that we were farther from civilization gave it an added beauty.

Once we came out upon a level valley of white sand, like the sand of the sea, but covered with a grove of palms. They were mostly ivory palms, and their fronds curved up gracefully like the waters of a fountain, quite unlike the cocoanut palms of the seacoast, whose fronds point awkwardly in all directions like a peacock's tail that has been caught in the lawnmower.

Usually our trail led through damp glades, where we saw only the bordering jungle, but occasionally we came out upon narrow cliffs that afforded a bird's-eye view of the great woodland wilderness, an ocean of luxuriant vegetation that fell in rolling hills before us until it disappeared in the bluish haze of eternity.

From one such cliff we sighted our next *tambo* hours before we reached it. The *tambo*, variously called "Dos da Mayo," "La Cumbre," or "Kilometro 96," was situated upon a projecting spur which jutted out from the main ridge. On three sides the spur fell so steeply that the little thatched hut, upon the vantage-point, seemed isolated from all the rest of the world. Amid the hundred of miles of unbroken tree tops below us, one wisp of curling blue smoke from the campfire of some distant band of wandering Indians alone betrayed the existence of other humans, and this seemed the more to emphasize the utter loneliness of the tiny hotel in the wilderness.

The ringing of the telephone in the isolated tavern, as we approached, startled us. It was out of place. Our hostess of the night before

was calling up to reassure herself that we had not been harmed by Chunchos. We had seen no Indians, we told the half-breed woman who was answering the call.

"One never does," she said.

She hung up the receiver and rose. The old-fashioned box telephone stood against the mud-plastered cane wall so close to the floor that one had to squat cross-legged upon the ground to use it. She and her sister-in-law, who ran the hotel, were expecting us, arrayed in their best print gowns. One of them was struggling in a pair of slippers, to which she was quite evidently unaccustomed; the other was barefoot.

They apologized for the absence of their husbands. One was ill. The other was working upon the trail. We could hear the sick man tossing restlessly on his cot behind the burlap curtain that separated his bed chamber from the living room. Several times, as we ate our supper of rice and yucca root by the light of an old oil lantern, we heard his wracking cough. Oliver, who knew something of medicine, examined him and found him dying from consumption. One could feel the atmosphere of death hovering over the lonely tavern. It was oppressive between those mud-patched walls. After supper, Herbert and I went out into the gathering twilight to escape it. A fog was rolling up from the valleys below. It came creeping up in thick, damp masses, blotting out one after another of the hilltops beneath, until like the walls of a vault it left the



thatched hut standing alone on the desolate mountainside.

The next day we remained at "La Cumbre." It was the Sabbath of my missionary companions. The *tambo* was not the most attractive we had encountered. The bed consisted of logs insufficiently covered by a cornhusk mattress which evidently included also the cobs. The pillow was so hard that I thought seriously of exchanging it for a nice soft slab of rock. Yet one could not fail to appreciate the kindness of the people, even to the little barefooted girl who brought us wild flowers from the forest and insisted that we wear them. We filled all the buttonholes in our coats, and rather than hurt her feelings, would have cut a few extra holes in our garments.

As a rule, the hotel keepers do little work along the Pichis Trail. The government allows them five pounds a month for keeping the hotel, which is ample for the support of a family in this country. Some of the more civilized Chunchos come in from time to time with corn or yucca, glad to exchange it for a few cents' worth of raw rum. The rum, together with the never-failing rice, is brought in by the fortnightly mail train.

Several Indians came in to "La Cumbre" during that Sabbath Day—sturdy, brown, barefooted fellows, dressed in the usual brown garment. While the Indians along the Pichis Trail all belong to the general group of Chunchos, they are





IT WAS THE SABBATH OF MY MISSIONARY COMPANIONS



ONE OF THE MISSIONARIES WITH THE INDIANS AT A NATIVE  
HOTEL



sub-divided into Campas and Amueshas. The *tambo* at "La Cumbre" is a rough dividing line between the territory of the two subdivisions, the Amueshas living back along the line we had traveled, the Campas being ahead of us. Tradition says that the Amueshas are good Indians, and the Campas bad ones.

The Indians who came to the *tambo* that day were Amueshas, or good Indians, but they had brought much yucca root and were getting so much rum in exchange for it, that we had our doubts as to how long they might remain good. We took the precaution of wearing our revolvers, and keeping our eyes on our baggage.

Late in the afternoon, after they had tired themselves out by giving each other piggy-back rides up and down the front porch, and had fallen into a stupid sleep out behind the hog-pen, Herbert and I left the inn long enough to explore a tiny path that led into the forest. It did not take us far, leading only to a little clearing, wherein were two or three rough mounds of earth surmounted by crude wooden crosses.

The cough that sounded from behind the burlap curtain that night was a trifle weaker. It would not be long before another mound would be added to the family cemetery in the clearing. But he was still alive and called a feeble "Adios" to us when we took our departure the next morning.

We had just mounted, when the little girl came running to us with more wild flowers.

"She wanted you to wear them in honor of this day," explained her mother. "She's just seven years old to-day."

At Porvenir, the next *tambo*, which we reached after a seven hours' ride, the proprietor paused in his welcome to kill a small green snake which was wriggling across the front porch.

"Oh, yes, it's venomous," he explained, in answer to our question. "There are lots of them up in the roof, but they won't come down unless you shake the house."

To shake the house was not difficult. Perched high on wobbly stilts, with walls and floor of split bamboo, and a roof of palm-thatch, the whole structure trembled when the family dog scratched his fleas, and when the Rev. Dr. Oliver entrusted his 250 pounds to the rickety steps, the entire hotel threatened to collapse.

But the serpents apparently had a tight grip on the palm leaves above us, for we saw no more. Incidentally this small green snake was the only serpent I saw during the entire cross-continent trip. In most of the books I had read about tropical South America, the reptiles writhe across nearly every page. In actual jungle travel, although they may be along the trail in great numbers, they glide quietly out of the way at the traveler's approach, and he sees but few.

As we ate our usual rice dinner at Porvenir, the host enlivened us with tales of the Indian uprising in 1915, when the Chunchos attacked this

*tambo* and all the *tambos* on the road before us, killing several white men. The uprising had been caused by the Peruvian *comisario*, the local government official, who had aroused the Indians by molesting one of their women.

"That is always the cause, señores," he said. "Many years I have lived in this country. I have seen many Indian troubles, and always they were caused by a white man's interfering with native women."

He smiled.

"We Peruvians are not so self-restrained as you gringos. Our rubber gatherers go into the woods, just a party of men, and remain there many months. The Indian girls are not always unattractive. And when one white man antagonizes the Indians, all of us are in danger."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"But to-morrow you will be getting into the land of the Campas, the bad Indians, and I shall not worry you with my stories."

Possibly fear of the Campas had kept the half-breed peons employed by the government from giving the Pichis Trail as much attention beyond Porvenir as they had given the first part of it. The mud holes were deeper and the bordering jungle grew closer. Some attempt had been made at a remote time to convert it into a cobbled road, but the stones were several feet apart, with treacherous mire between, into which our mules

wallowed below their knees. At first the beasts tried to step from rock to rock, but the slimy fungus which covered these irregular stepping-stones, made them far more dangerous than the intervening muck.

Occasionally, where the brush beside the trail thinned sufficiently to permit a view, we could see clearings across a valley that indicated an Indian village, and sometimes we saw the smoke from their fires. But we caught no glimpse of the Indians themselves.

It was slow work and tiresome plodding along hour after hour. Animals seemed to be as rare as the Indians. Once a small black jaguar—incidentally the rarest of all animals in tropical South America—leaped down upon the path before us, stared wickedly for a moment, and vanished into the jungle. Once we saw a streak of reddish gray, as a cougar fled from us. As we passed through a grove of exceptionally tall trees, a family of gavilons, the vultures of the jungle, flapped their ashy dark wings, and scolded us in hoarse, croaking voices.

But on the whole, the forest seemed almost deserted, and silent save for the drone of insects, or the rustling of lizards in the brush. Some writers describe the jungle as noisy, others as silent. It is both, as is the ticking of a clock. The droning and the rustling blend into a continuous sound so regular as to become a silence, and just as the ticking of a clock at home becomes so familiar that it is not heard, so these noises of



the jungle become a great oppressive quiet. It seemed to us that the only sound in the whole immense wilderness was the "*Anda, macho!*" of our *cholo* boy, as he forced the packmule over the difficult muckholes.

Thirty-five kilometers over such a road took us nine hours, and it was evening when we reached the next *tambo*, at San Nicolas. Clouds had been gathering during the day, and we were barely under shelter of the thatched roof when the storm broke. Tropic storms are much alike. First the sky turns black overhead, then the tree-tops begin to sway with a wind that grows in volume until it becomes a shrieking gale, finally there is a tremendous clap of thunder, and then the rain comes in a perfect deluge. It beat upon the palm-leaves above us as though it would destroy them.

In the morning the rain had stopped, but the sky was lead-gray with promise of more to come. As we had only fifteen kilometers to travel this day, we waited at San Nicolas until after the noon meal.

It happened to be the day before the great Peruvian national holiday, and in celebration of the event, the landlord was going to slay the family bull, and send the meat to the adjoining *tambos* that all might feast. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was not present at the slaying, and the killing of the bull was a holiday in itself, except for the bull. First the man tied it to a stake in the front yard, and took a shot

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at it with a small-caliber rifle. As this only wounded it, he took several more shots, with no better results. Then his two semi-Indian laborers, and even Vicente, tried their marksmanship. Finally they brought out the family ax, and took turns hitting the bull, first with the blunt end, then with the other. This proving equally futile, they used their knives. The animal did not stop kicking until its head had been entirely removed.

We had practically lived on rice since starting on our journey, until we became so tired of it that we began to compose songs about it, but when the proprietor came to inquire whether we liked our beefsteak rare or well done, we answered in chorus:

“Thank you, we prefer rice.”

At least, the much overworked cereal did not have to be shot several times or hit with an ax or finally beheaded before it surrendered.

Great clouds of vapor were rising from the jungle as we continued our ride that afternoon. The bushes that struck us in the face as we slid down a rapidly descending trail showered us with water, while little sprinkles of rain completed the discomfort.

Just before arriving at Azupizu the next *tambo*, we came to a deep river, some fifty yards wide. At the opposite bank was moored a raft of six logs insecurely lashed together. Vicente assured us that the *tambo* was hidden in the banana trees just beyond the stream, but we

yelled and yelled in vain for some one to come down and paddle the raft to us. The intermittent showers increased to a steady downpour until it seemed that we might just as well plunge in to swim.

Finally an Indian boy with one eye came slowly through the banana grove, pushed the raft into the swirling current, and poled it across. While the missionaries took the baggage over, Vicente and I undertook to chase the mules into the river. This seemed easy enough, but in the center, they stopped upon a sandbar and refused to go farther. The stream was growing deeper and swifter with the heavy rain; the part before them was the deepest and swiftest, and becoming more so at every moment. Vicente whooped and screamed and danced and hurled rocks at them, while I fired my revolver into the air. The downpour became almost a cloudburst, and still they stood there with that patiently miserable expression that no other animals can duplicate. We finally had to swim across ourselves, and attack them with clubs, before we landed them on the other bank.

We had left San Nicolas with an escort assigned to us by the engineer of the road. He was a short, stocky, pock-marked road worker, whose cheek was always distended with a large chew of coca-leaves, and whose hip pocket was similarly distended with a flask of raw sugar-cane rum. His particular mission was to chop down the jungle with a machete when the trail became impassable, but he had dropped behind unnoticed

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early in the day to drain his flask and fall over a cliff.

He came into Azupizu, however, none the worse for his tumble. When I commiserated him, he very politely remarked that he was glad it had not been myself. This seemed very thoughtful on his part, and I said so as I returned to him his bag of personal possessions, which I had been carrying across my saddle to lighten his load.

"Not at all, señor," he replied.

In explanation, he reached into the bag and showed me two dozen sticks of dynamite with detonators attached, which he was bringing to the *tambo* ahead to be used in blowing fish out of the river. I had been carrying it all day over a slippery trail, on a mule that frequently stumbled.

During the next day's journey we saw several distant Indian camps, and upon our arrival at Miriatirañi, the last *tambo*, we met a whole tribe of the much-dreaded Campas Chunchos.

It seems that the Peruvian who was temporarily in charge of the *tambo* had married a Chuncha squaw, whereupon not only her immediate family, but half a dozen other families, had come to live with him at his expense. The wife had adopted civilized garb, but she still dyed her face with red achiote seed, and when not occupied with her household duties would go back into the woods to huddle with her monkey-like relatives and to join in the favorite tribal pastime of picking things out of one another's hair.

The chief of the group was a cripple with two shriveled legs. He alone of them spoke Spanish, and despite his infirmities, seemed to be much the brightest mentally. His wife, a big buxom woman, rather handsome in her Indian way, seemed very proud of him; apparently she felt her position to be rather unique as the wife of the only cripple in the community.

With the exception of the Peruvian's wife, and the chief, who wore a European shirt without trousers, all were dressed in the usual Chunchos costume, draped with necklaces of packay seeds, supplemented with strings of monkeys' teeth and tapirs' toes. All of the Campas Chunchos, like the Chunchos I had seen on my former trip to the Chanchamayo, were short, but very stocky, particularly the women, who, while not fat, were decidedly thickset and plump. With their brown skin, they rather resembled little monkeys. Even their motions and gestures were monkey-like, particularly when they gathered in a group beneath the palm-shed and huddled together to watch us.

I was much surprised, however, to observe their affection for each other. One is apt to think of Indians as stolid and undemonstrative. Among the Andean Indians one never sees anything approaching affection in the attitude of husband and wife. But these Chunchos were an exception. Each of the women would nestle beside her husband, usually with her chubby brown arms about his neck. One of the women had a



cute way of looking into her husband's face with a rapturous expression and kissing him every minute or two, although he was without question the ugliest-looking specimen of a savage I had ever seen. The fact that we were watching with fascinated interest did not deter her from the performance of this little wifely operation, nor from the maternal one of feeding the baby. And this affectionate little wife, from all appearances, could not have been more than twelve years of age, although she was already a mother, and promised soon to have a second child.

None of the Indians at Miriatirañi had more than one wife, although the chief with the crippled legs confirmed the report that polygamy is considered legitimate in his tribe.

After we had partaken of a dinner of bananas and fish—the latter blown out of the river by the dynamite I had unwittingly carried—Herbert and I went down to the stream by moonlight to bathe. There were only a few mosquitos about, for we had not yet reached the mosquito region. We had been warned against plunging into the river on account of the little man-eating fish known as the paña in Peru, but better known by its Brazilian name of pyrhaña, which infests the Amazonian tributaries, and which will attack men or cattle who venture into the deeper pools.

Accordingly we contented ourselves with standing in the shallow water and pouring it over us. But it seems that all nature conspires against bathing in this region, for we were threatened



with attack by another enemy—the vampire bat. These blood-sucking bats are of two types. There is a large one, the true vampire, with hideous large ears, and wings two feet across, which, despite its size, is comparatively harmless. There is also a smaller one, about the size of a mouse, but as hideous as the large vampire, and far more to be feared. They have been known to attack men, usually sleepers, whom they bite in the toes through the mosquito net. Our mules had suffered much from them during the journey. Not a day passed but one, and sometimes all, of the animals appeared in the morning with an open sore in the shoulder and a streak of black, congealed blood running down the side. This last day Dr. Oliver's mule had been so weak from the loss of blood that Oliver had been obliged to walk most of the way on foot.

Those which threatened us at our bath were the little ones. They circled around and around us, while some of the bolder demons perched on the rocks a few feet away. Even after we had driven them off with flapping towels, they continued to hover about, shrieking at us with little squeaking cries.

We found our way back to the *tambo* with the aid of Herbert's pocket torch. It attracted the Indians' attention, and the chief called out in Spanish to ask its name.

"*Luz electrica*," we told him, giving it the Spanish title.

Evidently the words were new even to the chief.

All the Indians screamed with mirth, trying to repeat the phrase.

*"Luz ecleclelec,"* they said.

We pronounced it over and over, while they repeated it, but they could come no closer than *"ecleclelec."*

Tiring of this, we tried to persuade them to sing for us. They were bashful. To encourage them, Herbert and I put our heads together and gave them some close harmony on "The Ragtime Strutters' Ball" and "Sweet Adeline." They laughed again, as loudly and impolitely as they had laughed at our "Luz electrica." The chief still declined to sing.

"Perhaps we've discouraged him," suggested Herbert. "He couldn't possibly hope to equal that duet."

"All right," I said. "We'll get Oliver to give him 'Abide With Me.' That will overcome his reticence."

Oliver was a better missionary than he was a singer. His habit of solacing himself by singing hymns as we rode miserably through the rain that day had added considerably to the discomfort of Herbert and myself.

We started off to call him, when the chief made a remark that set his companions laughing.

"What did he say?" we asked Vicente.

Vicente only grinned. But we insisted.

"He says he can not sing like that, señor. He says only a parrot can make such noises."

We retired, greatly offended, to our cane-husk

mattresses. Late into the night we could hear the Indians repeating "Luz ecleclelec." Then they would all laugh. Next some one would make a raucous squawking noise imitative of our singing. Then they would laugh again.

We had come to our last day on muleback, before changing at Puerto Yessup to a dugout canoe. Ever since passing Eneñez, a week before, we had been descending rapidly. Now, although still three thousand miles from the Atlantic, we were only 212 meters above sea-level. The night had been cool, but as the morning mists cleared away, the sun came out blazing hot, to be hailed in joyful chorus by millions of locusts and other insects.

We began to strike patches of wild cane. Flies buzzed around us in great numbers. Lizards peeked at us around tree-trunks, dilated their brilliantly colored throats in great excitement, and whisked out of sight. The trees were covered with a tangle of vines that climbed to the branches and dropped air-roots to build an impenetrable wall of vegetation along the trail.

A last day of any journey is a long one, but we emerged finally upon the river that was to be our road for the next three weeks—the Pichis River. It was low now, the floods of the rainy season having subsided, and the shallow stream was full of rapids. Had the river been at its highest, we could have descended in one of the wood-burning steam launches which ascend the Amazon trib-

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utaries to purchase vegetable ivory. But now, in the dry season, we would have to shoot the rapids in a dugout canoe, making camp at night on the mosquito-infested sandbars along the way.

At the final *tambo* that night we discussed the Chunchos. The Indians, during their uprising five years before, had killed several white men at this *tambo*.

"I'm sorry we didn't see any of the wild ones," I remarked boastfully.

The proprietor smiled.

"Did not the señor see several of them last night at Miriatirañi?"

"Yes, I saw some Chunchos, but—"

"They were in the uprising."

I recalled an impulse I had cherished the night before to go out and lick the whole bunch of them for keeping us awake with "Ecleclelec." It probably is fortunate that I didn't.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### THE BATTLE OF PUERTO BERMUDEZ

**A**T Puerto Yessup, the final *tambo* on the Pichis Trail, the inn-keeper provided us with a canoe, wherewith we might make the four-hour journey down-river to Puerto Bermudez, a village of fourteen thatched huts, from which we could continue our long cross-continent expedition with the Peruvian mail.

He also provided us with five Indian paddlers. They were civilized to the extent of wearing trousers, and also shirts, but the shirts hung outside of their trousers in approved Indian fashion, while they had stained their faces with achiote seed and made a further bid for picturesque savagery by wearing bunches of long turkey feathers in their coarse black hair.

They climbed into the long wooden canoe, laughing and chattering like so many children, and pushed off without waiting for our baggage. We tried to explain to them in Spanish that since we had carted our possessions several hundred miles by packmule, we disliked to leave them here in the middle of the wilderness. But the Indians did not understand even good Spanish, much less

the Spanish we were speaking. They nodded sympathetically, giggled some more, and paddled harder.

Then I stood up in the canoe and said things in English—forceful things that I had learned to say in the army. Immediately, as though profanity were their native tongue, they turned around and landed again.

“Well,” remarked the Rev. Dr. Oliver, “it’s fortunate that one of us is not debarred by profession from speaking their language.”

After we had started again, this time with the baggage, the Indians kept repeating my words, like so many schoolboys, and chuckling over them. They would paddle enough to get the canoe well started, then they would let it glide with the swift current while they played funny little ditties on a five-tubed reed pipe which passed from hand to hand. Thus accompanied by native music and a volley of newly acquired English phrases, we raced between the jungle-grown banks toward Bermudez.

Our canoe was a large one, capable of holding twenty persons. Like all canoes of the region, it was hewed and burned from one immense log, and like all the paddlers of the Amazon country, the Indians sat in the extreme bow, with only one in the stern to guide it. As we came to rapids, where the river frothed and swirled between ugly rocks or snags, they would lay aside the reed pipe, and bend to the work, their faces shining with excitement. But having passed the whirlpools and



come again to deep water, they would rest upon their paddles, laughing like children.

Both river and woods were teeming with life. Little fishes leaped from the water in silver showers. Flocks of wild fowl rose up from the brush at the river's edge as we approached, and fled with a great fluttering of wings. The higher trees were festooned with the nest of the japim bird, like hanging baskets, sometimes as many as forty-five on one tree.

Suddenly the Indians pointed down the river. "*Lobos!*" they exclaimed.

On the West Coast the word means "seals." We had not expected to see seals in the Amazon country. But far ahead of us, swimming rapidly from our path, were half a dozen creatures that looked like seals. They really are a form of otter, with feet instead of flappers, but in the water they resemble the salt water seal. Although the Indians paddled furiously to overtake them, they escaped up one of the numerous bayous that joined our river, while our Indians had to turn their attention to the shooting of another rapid.

Later we stopped at a sandy island, where the men separated and walked about, their eyes fixed intently upon little forked tracks in the sand. The tracks led back to newly heaped-up mounds, where the men dug with their hands for long slender white eggs. It was one of those islands where the turtles come to lay. These nests were to provide our omelet for the next week.

Our approach to Bermudez was heralded by the Indians' blowing on a concho-shell, evidently as a signal. Then, as we turned a bend in the river, we caught sight of a thatched roof, followed by another and another, until all fourteen were visible. Not having seen more than one thatched roof at a time for many days, it looked liked a city to us, and when a *calamina* government office appeared, followed by a wireless tower, we felt that we had reached a metropolis.

Puerto Bermudez had not been expecting us, yet during the ten minutes that elapsed between our turning of the bend and our arrival at the landing place, every inhabitant had turned out to welcome us. The arrival of visitors here is an infrequent event, and one for much ceremony. The trumpeter trumped, the garrison turned out prepared either to present arms or resist attack, and the reception committee came proudly down the steep mud bank to receive us.

He proved to be an Italian. To our surprise, he greeted us in English.

"Hello. You Americans?"

And then he extended the welcome.

"All this dump belong you."

His fellow townsmen, upon the bank above, were admiring him, and he could not resist sticking his hands in his pockets and strutting around a bit.

"Where did you learn English?" we asked him.

"Me. Oh, I learn everything. I go everywhere. I been United States. I see everything.

I speak heem leetle bit English. No? You betcha. All right. Shure!"

It was the middle of the dry season, and the houses of Bermudez stood high and dry upon tall stilts at the top of a thirty-foot mud bank. Instead of embarking here on a steam-launch, as we had planned when we started our trip, we would be obliged to await the mail canoe. The Peruvian mail, which travels over the same route we had chosen from the capital to the isolated Amazonian city of Iquitos, was supposed to be one day behind us, but for some reason had been delayed upon the road. Accordingly we made ourselves at home in one of the thatched houses, which served as a hotel for the infrequent guests.

The trip down the river would be a hard one, the Italian explained. At night we would have to sleep upon mosquito-infested sandbars, with jaguars threatening us from the jungle on one side, and crocodiles from the river on the other. Cannibals were not likely to molest us, but it would nevertheless be a difficult and dangerous trip, particularly as we were not hardened to it, like himself.

During the absence of steamers, Bermudez was little more than a military outpost. Even this was incomplete when we arrived, as its commander, the *comisario*, had gone down the river to investigate rumors of an Indian uprising. Twelve soldiers that remained had little to do except to answer roll call morning and evening, which they

usually did in their underwear. They were a combination of soldier-colonists. The Peruvian government, in order to open this little-developed country, gives away five hectarias of land to any man who will settle here, together with five additional hectarias for each member of his family. The soldiers stationed here are also allowed to take advantage of this opportunity.

Of course, the colonists themselves do not work. A white man in the tropics would lose caste if he did anything that an Indian can do. Except for the soldiers, the wireless operator, the Italian—who happened to be the mechanic at the wireless station—and the old village postmaster, the population of the region was entirely Indian.

In fact, the white men were in such minority that the town lived in perpetual fear of an Indian attack. On our first day a colonist came running in with a story of seventy savages in war paint, with bows and arrows, whom he had just seen on the edge of town. The bugle sounded, and the soldiers turned out with their rusty rifles, but there was no attack. The Italian discredited the rumor. The man who started it, he said, owned a "hotel" where some of the soldiers boarded. He wanted to start these scares so that more soldiers would be sent to Bermudez and he would get more boarders.

"You no worry," the Italian comforted us. "You no worry when me here. Me box fighter, see?" and he made a few passes with his hairy



THE HOTEL AT BERMUDEZ



ON OUR WAY DOWN THE RIVER





arms. "Indians come here, they get one what-you-call-eet?—one big April fool."

Bermudez, on one more intimate acquaintance, began to lose its metropolitan aspect. With nothing to do but wait there, we soon exhausted its limited amusements, and settled down to sitting on a soap-box under the shade of the hotel's palm-thatched porch, and drinking lemonade while we watched the naked Indian maidens bathing across the river. The Rev. Dr. Oliver questioned whether this was the proper thing for us to do, but then the river was two hundred yards wide at this point, and the Indians were some distance farther up the stream.

These tropical Indians, unlike the *cholos* of the Andes, bathed frequently during the heat of the day. Their one-piece brown robe slips off easily. We could see them come down through the banana grove to the sandy beach; there would be a flash of shiny brown skin as they doffed their garments and dived into the river; in a moment they would emerge, slip hastily into their robe without waiting for the body to dry, and would disappear back among the bananas. Usually men and women bathed separately. They would come down alternately in groups, about every half hour during the hotter part of the day.

Strange to tell, the Indian native seemed to feel the heat far more than the less-accustomed white man. Bates, the English naturalist who spent

eleven years on the lower Amazon, remarks it of the Indians there. I found it true of the Chuncho Indians at Bermudez. Possibly the explanation is found in the fact that the hairless bodies of the Indians perspire less freely than the white man's.

We sometimes varied the monotony by fishing with hook and line, but with little success. The water is so full of live food that the fish will not take bait. The natives laughed at us for trying. They always use dynamite. Nevertheless, since our main object was to kill time, we continued with hook and line.

One day a Peruvian asked permission to accompany us. We readily assented.

"We'll start as soon as we cut some poles."

The Peruvian looked at us in surprise.

"No, indeed. Let us stop at an Indian camp and have the Indians cut them."

It seemed ridiculous to trouble the Indians to do this, when a jungle of wild cane grew within a hundred yards of us, and one blow from a machete would cut us an ideal bamboo pole. Apparently the Indians felt the same way about it when we pulled in to shore half a mile up the river beside a group of their huts. They were seated in the shade, two men, and several young girls, the men doing nothing, the women either weaving baskets or toasting a small rat-like animal over the fire. They did not look pleased at our visit. The Indian's greatest wish in this region, as elsewhere, is to be let alone.

The Peruvian picked out the more important-looking of the two men.

"Run and cut me three nice fishing poles," he directed.

It was said in Spanish, in a tone which presupposed immediate and unquestioning obedience. The Indian looked at him evenly, neither offended nor otherwise moved.

"Run and cut them yourself," he replied.

The Peruvian now assumed an argumentative tone. He wanted the poles for the three American gentlemen. It was the duty of all the local residents to show hospitality to these visitors, and to supply their every want. The Indian looked at us, but seemed unimpressed with our reputed importance. Probably he felt that he personally had not invited us. But after some persuasion he took the proffered machete, and handed it to the other Indian, who went out into the woods and handed it to another Indian, who cut us the three crookedest and most unserviceable poles he could find.

We handed the big Indian a Peruvian two-cent piece. These big copper coins are valued more by the natives than a silver ten-cent piece, and infinitely more than a thousand dollar bill. To them, the bill means nothing, while the copper coin means an ornament to be hung through the wife's nose. He took it without a word of thanks; Indians seldom express gratitude.

"Have you an extra fish-hook?" he asked.

We gave him one. He took it without a word,

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and turning his back, sat down again in the shade.

Despite the predictions of the villagers, we caught several fair sized fish, which the natives call "corbina." It does not even remotely resemble the corbina of the Pacific, but the Peruvians seem to use the name loosely to designate any large fish except the whale. This Amazonian corbina consisted mostly of bones, having just enough flesh on it to distinguish it from a cactus. Only a very patient man could eat it, yet we welcomed it for the variety it gave to our menu of turtle egg omelets, for a turtle egg is all yolk and no matter how well it is cooked, there seems always to be a stream of gooey yellow fluid escaping from some part of it.

One day our landlord surprised us, however, by serving a roasted bird resembling a squab, but our delight quickly vanished when we tried in vain to make any impression upon it with our teeth.

Oliver summoned the landlord, and through me as interpreter, inquired the nature of the delicacy.

"Chicken," said the Peruvian, but he avoided our eyes rather guiltily.

After dinner we discovered that the family parrot had disappeared and that the region behind the kitchen was strewn with tell-tale green feathers.

But if our fare was limited, it was not the fault of the villagers, who appeared greatly flattered that their town had been visited voluntarily by

three strangers who did not have to come there. There were several real hens in town, and whenever one of them laid an egg, the owner immediately brought it to the hotel and presented it to us with his compliments and best wishes.

Also, to amuse us, they brought their curiosities and exhibited them. A small boy who killed a lizard would bring it to us for approval. Possibly, since the last visitors at Bermudez had been naturalists in search of specimens, the boys cherished a hope that we might purchase the dead reptiles they presented. One man had a baby otter, or "lobo," just big enough to waddle around on its webbed feet and bleat plaintively for its lost mother. The owner explained to us that he had just begun to feed it fish; when it grew a little older, he said he would teach it to go into the river and catch fish for him, thus returning his kindness.

One night we had venison, also a present from the villagers. There were plenty of little red deer in the woods, but the Chuncho Indians regard them as sacred, and although they may kill them for their hide, they religiously refuse to eat the meat.

From Lloyd, back in the Chanchamayo, I had heard many stories of strange superstitions; from soldier-colonists at Bermudez I heard many more. One of the Chuncho Indians in town was eating no meat of any kind, because he was the father of a four months' child; I was told that following the birth of a child, the father must abstain from eat-



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ing meat; for some reason the eating of meat by the father was considered injurious to the offspring.

The Chunchos still believe firmly in their witch doctors, who devine all things by chewing leaves and spitting them upon their hands, forming designs which they read much as old-fashioned maiden ladies among more enlightened people pretend to read the tea grounds. One colonist told me of a personal experience with this custom. There had been an epidemic of fever upon his farm, and a native witch doctor had put the blame upon the four year old daughter of one of the Indian laborers. This laborer had worked long for white men, and his ideas were more advanced than those of his fellow workers. When the father was ordered by the witch doctor to take his daughter out and drown her in the river, he had disobeyed by hiding her in the woods. There she was discovered by the other tribesmen, who killed both her and the disobedient father.

One Peruvian in Puerto Bermudez had good cause to fear the Indians. He was old Diaz Real, the village postmaster.

Real had been the proprietor of the inn back at Puerto Yessup when the Chunchos attacked it five years ago; after the Peruvian *comisario* had aroused the Indians by stealing an Indian girl for a concubine. The guilty man escaped the natives temporarily, although he brought destruction upon all the government inns along that part of the Pichis Trail, and death to several white men.



Several months later, when the *comisario* had ventured to return to Yessup, a party of Chunchos fell upon the place unexpectedly, and attacked not only the official but also Real and his family. The *comisario* was slain; also Real's wife. Real's daughter, fleeing, was brought down by an arrow. Real himself, with his son, had escaped into the woods, and made his way to Bermudez.

Real was now sixty years old, but appeared much older. He had a permanent job as post-master at Bermudez, where, in consideration of his past suffering, he was permitted to remain a fixture even when the government changed. Twice a month, when the mail passed on its way from Lima to Iquitos, he saw that it was taken out of one canoe and put into the other. When not busily engaged in doing this, he pottered around in his garden behind the bamboo post-office, and planted pineapples. At night the wild pigs came out of the jungle and ate his pineapples. Real merely sighed, and planted more pineapples.

At length our four days of waiting came to an end, and the canoe arrived with the mail for Iquitos. It was another big event, similar to our own arrival. When the concho-shell sounded up-river, the village school-teacher dismissed school—the student body consisted of five, of which four were her own—and all turned out to see the landing of the dugout.

Our landlord at the village hotel, thinking we might wish to celebrate, brought out the four

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bottles of red wine which, except for a little masato (a sort of native intoxicant made from the yucca root), represented the town's entire stock of booze. Until the rainy season began, and steamers came up from Iquitos, these four bottles could not be replenished. The landlord, as befits a profiteer who has cornered the market, was holding them at a premium.

My companions, being missionaries, had no use for it. Explanation was difficult. They had come to this far country to size up the opportunities for missionary work, and knowing the established church's opposition to the invasion of Latin America by new sects, they were keeping their profession a secret. The few Americans that the natives had seen in this country had been mostly adventurers, usually with the adventurer's love of strong drink, and they could not understand our sobriety.

At one of the inns along the line, when the Rev. Dr. Oliver, seeing that the bar was empty and hoping to learn that this was the result of the new world-wide spreading of prohibition, had inquired why there was no rum there, the landlord had been very apologetic.

"It is due to the difficulties of transportation," he explained. "But I think you can get some at the next inn."

Here at Bermudez, when we declined the four bottles of red wine, our Italian friend, who was always delighted with an opening for the display of his knowledge, explained it for us.

"These are regular Americans," he told the proprietor. "They drink nothing but straight whiskey."

Having seen the arrival of the awaited canoe, we packed our belongings, and called on Señor Real to learn how soon the mail would start for Iquitos.

"Nobody knows," he answered. "Maybe tomorrow, maybe next day, maybe day after, maybe one week, maybe two weeks. *Quien sabe?*"

"But why not immediately?"

"I am waiting for the other canoe to come up from Iquitos."

This seemed a foolish waste of time. We could see no reason for the down-bound mail to wait here for the up-bound mail. He brought out an old order, on faded paper, which stated that the two mails should pass each other here at Bermudez. The order dated half-way back to Pizarro.

"But this is not an order from the present administration," we pointed out. "It's two revolutions behind the rest of the country."

He admitted this.

"But then," he suggested, "some one here at Bermudez may get a letter from Iquitos and want to answer it by return mail."

We began to boil. It was a matter of current comment in Bermudez that none of its residents had received a letter from anywhere during the past six months, and we told him so. He shrugged his shoulders.

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"True," he admitted, "but just suppose somebody should get one."

He left us and went back into his garden. The wild pigs had eaten his pineapples again, and he had to plant more.

Day after day continued to crawl slowly past, and the up-bound mail did not arrive. A wireless message from Masisea, the town below Bermudez, informed us that it had left there ten days before. Masisea was only 180 miles distant, but with the river at its lowest, it would be a tremendous task to push the heavy canoe up over the rapids. It meant hard poling at all times, and frequently its Indian crew would be obliged to wade and shove the canoe. There was no communication between Masisea and Bermudez, and we could hear nothing more of them. In fact, between Masisea and Bermudez, there was scarcely a habitation of any kind, much less telegraph and telephone.

We had in our possession a letter given us by President Leguia, directing all officials along our route to facilitate our journey. Here in the interior they had heard that Leguia was president, but that meant nothing to them. When we showed it proudly to Señor Real, he showed us Pizarro's order that the mails must cross at Bermudez. We tried to wire his superior authorities at Iquitos for permission to proceed, but by this time the wireless had broken down.

When a canoe finally made its appearance, it proved to be a false alarm. The *comisario* was

returning from his investigation of an Indian uprising. He proved to be a very capable-looking young man, who sought to hide his youth behind a newly-grown black beard. He had a powerful little physique, which he encased in a military uniform two sizes too small. He also was unimpressed by our letter, despite its huge red seal and two yards of pink ribbon. He was glad to have us make ourselves at home in Bermudez, but he could not send us downstream in this informal manner without offending the proprietor of the hotel where we were stopping.

Four more days dragged past. The Italian began to suggest that the canoe had been captured and its crew eaten by the Cashivos. The Cashivos are a tribe of naked cannibals who are said to inhabit the west bank of the river. Peruvian troops drove them back from the stream years ago, and killed most of them, but have never succeeded in exterminating them entirely.

The Italian mentioned this only as a remote possibility. Perhaps he wished to make us feel more comfortable in Bermudez and less anxious to start down the river. Certainly he himself did his best to amuse us. He owned an aged phonograph with one cracked record which he said was Caruso, but which resembled a jazz band. Every evening he brought this down to the hotel and played it for us from 6.30 until 10.30.

Had we been entomologists, our stay would have been most profitable. It was not necessary



to chase the bugs into the jungle; they came to our hotel and chased us. At night a large beetle, locally called the "ferro-carril" or "railroad bug," circled around us as we sat at dinner, buzzing like its namesake, and threatening to overturn the lamp if it ever struck it. There were so many ants and small bugs crawling around that our host provided a small brush at each plate for clearing the table.

Finally a canoe arrived. It was not the mail canoe, but another which had started with it from Masisea. It brought the reassurance that the mail canoe would eventually arrive. This first one brought passengers. They had been nearly two weeks en route from Masisea, toiling from daylight until dark, poling until their hands were sore, and wading until their feet were cut and lacerated by the sharp rocks in the river-bed. Even passengers had been obliged to work as hard as the Indian canoemen.

The village sat up late that night, watching for the mail, but one by one they retired until only the Rev. Mr. Herbert and I remained. Even Dr. Oliver had gone to bed, and we were about to follow, when far down the river we heard the faint note of a concho-horn.

It seemed too good to be true. I seized my revolver, and rushing out upon the front porch of the hotel, blazed away in celebration. Herbert followed my example. From the banana grove across the river, in the quiet of the night, the twelve shots reëchoed startlingly loud.



But immediately afterwards another sound re-echoed, equally startling. From the *comisario* headquarters came the notes of a bugle. Somewhere a voice screamed, "Indians!"

I gripped Herbert by the arms.

"The guard is turning out. They think it's an attack!"

Having formed my opinion of South American armies from the comic opera, which I had witnessed on the West Coast, I would have expected, had I done any intelligent expecting at all, that the Peruvian troops, awakened by such a volley, in a town threatened constantly with a massacre, would have fled to the woods, leaving their rifles behind them. But the garrison at Bermudez turned out in full force, bringing its rifles with it.

As we heard the little sergeant issuing ammunition directions before our door, we began to feel that we had been over-enthusiastic. Also, as we lay beneath our mosquito nets, whither we retired to simulate innocence, we began to wonder what the penalty might be for starting such an alarm.

So far the troops had thought only of Indians. The sergeant having issued the wrong ammunition in his excitement, those with Mauser rifles and Mannlicher ammunition were hastily exchanging cartridges with the fellows who had Mannlicher rifles and Mauser ammunition. And during the exchange, one after another began to see the Indians.

"There they are!" one would cry.

"No, don't shoot! That's my mule."

Finally we heard the sergeant's voice.

"I smell powder smoke right here."

Then we could hear the whole army sniff.

Herbert's voice came from under his mosquito net in a faint whisper.

"You'd better go out and explain it to them; you speak better Spanish than I do."

The idea did not enthuse me.

"No, Herbert; they'll listen to you with greater respect."

Meanwhile the sniffing had been coming closer and closer until it was just outside the door. Now that the mail was ready to start downstream on the morrow, were we to be kept at Bermudez at hard labor for a term of years? Was it not better to go out and confess, especially when we were sure to get caught eventually?

I climbed out of bed, and walked out upon the porch, Herbert with me. The whole town was assembled there in the moonlight. Even old Real was present in an insufficient nightshirt, carrying a muzzle-loading shotgun.

"We did the shooting," I said.

There followed a surprised silence. I could hear the frogs croaking on the other side of the river.

Finally the Italian spoke up.

"What for you did those?"

One's mind is apt to work quickly when one is frightened.

“To celebrate the first of September.”

That puzzled him. This was not surprising. It puzzled me equally. I slapped him on the back and tried to laugh pleasantly. It sounded exactly like the frogs across the stream.

“Surely you remember the First of September.”

I was trying to invent something—something like the day that Peru and the United States first opened diplomatic relations—anything that would cement more friendly feelings between these fellows and myself.

The Italian knitted his brows, then his face brightened, and he began to scream with laughter.

“Shure!” he yelled.

It was several minutes, or so it seemed, before he could control his mirth.

“First September, shure! First September, all da gringos play joke, no? Den dey all say ‘April fool!’ Shure!”

Herbert and I laughed with him. Then he explained April Fools’ Day to the rest of the village, and they laughed.

“And next,” the Italian continued, “all da gringos say, ‘Have a drink wid me.’ Shure!”

There was no other way out of it. The Rev. Dr. Oliver remained disapprovingly in bed, but Herbert was game. The landlord brought out the four bottles of red wine, now tripled in price, and Bermudez drank to the great American holiday, the First of September, April Fools’ Day.

Later, when we consulted our calendar we found it was September 6th. Killing time at Bermudez, we had lost all track of dates, but so, apparently, had Bermudez itself.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

### CANOEING THROUGH THE WILDERNESS

ON the following morning Captain Rivera, the Peruvian in charge of the mail expedition, called for us with two big dug-out canoes.

His Indian paddlers, like those which had brought us to Bermudez, were all picturesque fellows, but the most striking of them was Menichi. Menichi, whose name meant "The Tiger," in Indian dialect, sat in the extreme bow of the larger canoe, and resembled the carved dragon upon an ancient Roman galley. He was an aged savage, with teeth filed to points and a large silver bangle stuck like a thumb-tack through his upper lip. He further showed his originality in dress by balancing upon his head a most battered relic of a once-civilized straw hat, surmounted by the inevitable bunch of turkey feathers. The hat was so full of holes that it afforded protection neither from the rain nor sun, being worn like the bangle in his lip solely for decorative purposes. It was much too small to fit tightly over the masses of long black hair, and it fell off at each lurch of the canoe, but Menichi would recover it, pat it affectionately, and replace it upon his greasy locks, where it

would usually remain until the canoe lurched again.

Menichi's paddling was in a class with his make-up. He had selected the smallest and narrowest paddle in the boat. From time to time he would insert it gently in the water, let it drift back with the current as the other paddlers shoved ahead, and would then withdraw it, reflect meditatively for several minutes, and repeat the operation.

Behind Menichi, in our canoe, sat three more Indians, two of them mere boys, all of them less striking in appearance but more effective as paddlers. The two missionaries and I sat in the center on improvised seats made by piling together the mail bags. Another Indian, the steersman, sat behind us. Ours was the larger of the two canoes. The smaller one contained Captain Rivera, stretched out on his back with a time-worn newspaper over his face, from a small hole in which his cigarette projected skyward, giving the canoe a vague resemblance to a miniature steamboat. For paddlers he had two wiry little Indian youths.

Ordinarily, even in the dry season, we might have faced a voyage of only two or three days before meeting one of the steam launches which ascend the Amazonian tributaries to trade, but now, at the end of the season, the river was so low that the length of our canoe-trip was indefinite. Perhaps old Menichi realized this fact, and was conserving his strength with the wisdom of his



great age. We did not at first appreciate his keen Indian intelligence. In fact, Herbert and I christened him "Any Part," which was the Rev. Dr. Oliver's polite nickname for his favorite cut of roast chicken. But we were still to learn much about Menichi.

Our expedition started off like a picnic. We white men, after the custom of the white men in the tropics, sat beneath a canvas awning and watched the Indians sweat. It was as though we were drifting down some hitherto unexplored river. Once Bermudez, with its fourteen thatched roofs and its three wireless towers, had disappeared around the bend, we were gliding downstream between banks of unbroken forest. Now and then a gaviion or a pair of green parrots screeched at us from the trees; once in a while a turtle, frightened at our approach, slid quietly into the water. Otherwise, only the dip of the paddles broke the stillness.

At noon we landed on a sandbar, where Captain Rivera boiled rice, fried plantains, and made coffee. The Indians built the fire, and later washed the dishes—all except Menichi, who had sore feet, and usually sat down to pick at them when there was work to be done.

Throughout the afternoon we passed no habitation other than one or two Indian camps, and at sunset we stopped on another sandbar. The tropic sun sets quickly, and long before dinner was ready, day had changed to night. Our sandbar was a long, pebbly peninsula, just barely con-

nected with the mainland. We had brought hammocks, but there was no place to hang them unless we went back to the thick, snaky-looking forest.

We chose, therefore, to sleep in the canoe on the mail bags. The Indians, dropping upon the sand beside the fire, went easily to sleep. Not so ourselves. Some one was sending scrap-iron through the mail. The sacks were full of boxes and bundles, with a superabundance of points and corners. No matter how we rolled or twisted or contorted ourselves, new points and new corners kept coming up to poke us in some tender spot, of which we still had many.

Also, the jungle had come to life, as jungles will at night. Along the river bank the frogs began to croak. Amazonian frogs can croak louder and hoarser and deeper and oftener than any frogs I have ever heard, and they know fewer new melodies. In the woods, a million varieties of insects took up their million varieties of refrains, as though in competition with each other. For a while the crickets or locusts, their chorus swelling and rising, would gain the ascendancy, then something else would drown them out. One after another the mingled songs of the jungle life would rise and die away.

Suddenly, from the forest edge, not a hundred feet from us, came a new sound—a hoarse cat-like snarling, low at first, but rising in power to a roar. Some prowling jaguar was voicing his displeasure at our invasion of his domain. The

Indians sat up, listened, and threw more wood upon the fire.

Already the trip was losing some of its picnic qualities.

The moon rose about 3 A.M. the following morning. So did we. It was our plan to push ahead rapidly, taking advantage of the early morning moonlight. We had no camp to break. The Indians climbed aboard the canoe, took up their paddles, and we started.

A thick mist concealed the banks, a mist so heavy that it soaked through our clothes, while against our faces it felt like a wet blanket. Through it, we could see nothing. The Indians guided the canoe by the current.

The insect chorus of the evening before had tired itself out, to be replaced by the most horrible of all the jungle noises—the roar of the howling-monkeys. I had never heard anything so hideous, and it was hard to believe the Indians' statement that such a sound could be made by monkeys. It was an ominous throaty growling, continuous like the roar of wind through an old barn, and must be made by many of the creatures. The howler is a red monkey, the largest species found in South America. He makes his racket every morning and evening, presumably to intimidate his enemies.

The Indians ceased paddling to listen. Even old Menichi showed interest, for the first time

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since we had started, reaching for a curious blow gun that lay beside him in the canoe. It was a long, hollow pole, wrapped with fiber, and smeared with black wax. Its darts were tiny slivers, little larger than wisps of a broom, but poisoned with a native venom reputed to kill within sixty seconds. We could not see the howlers through the mist, however, and Menichi regretfully laid his weapon aside.

It was surprising to note how interested all the Indians were in the sounds about them. They would hear the peep of some bird, a faint twittering in the brush, and every one stopped paddling to listen. No doubt they heard these same noises every day of their lives, yet they never failed to show the keenest interest, staring through the mist with their sharp eyes to see the creatures that made them, acting always as though they heard them for the first time.

Once, when a wild turkey peeped, they paddled in to shore. One of the Indians, taking an old muzzle-loading shot gun, disappeared noiselessly into the brush. For several minutes we heard no sound. Then the shot gun boomed somewhere back in the woods. Another pause and it sounded again. Still we did not hear the man as he moved through the thick undergrowth, until he emerged silently, carrying two big birds known as "paujil." The paujil is a large black bird with a bright red beak, larger than a turkey, but with the same taste.

He stepped into the canoe. The paddles dipped silently, and we glided on through the fog.

As the rising sun began to dispell the mist, we came to the junction of the Pichis and Aparoquiali rivers. Here we stopped on another sandbar to prepare breakfast. The driftwood which the Indians collected for our fire was still soaking wet from the early morning damp, and had to be whittled before it would burn.

Captain Rivera, making a megaphone of his hands, hallooed loudly up the silent Aparoquiali, and a few minutes later the lone white settler of the region came down in a small canoe to see us. He proved to be an Irishman, Robert Crawford, once the rubber king of the district, with three hundred Indians to gather rubber for him. He had lost his money when rubber fell in value, and was now living alone on a small *chaori*, or farm, in the wilderness. He had been twenty-six years in the jungle, and did not care to leave it.

“Don’t you get lonesome?” I asked him.

“Is it lonesome I am? Sure and I am not. There are plenty of Indians hereabout, and sometimes there passes an Englishman or American.”

“How often?”

“Three or four times a year maybe. But it’s crazy they are—come through here with a net, chasing little bugs.”

For lunch, on another sandbar farther down the river, we feasted on turkey, duck, and wild boar.



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The boar was a contribution from Crawford. The duck we shot during the morning. Wild birds were plentiful along the river, although most of them were not edible. Particularly numerous was a large brown hen, called "chancho" or "pig-bird" by the natives. Also we saw many green and yellow parroquets, always in pairs. The Indians never wasted their valuable gunpowder on these things, although they invariably watched them with child-like interest.

We all enjoyed the feast except Menichi, who sat alone and picked his toes.

"Something is wrong with that Indian," said Captain Rivera in Spanish. "He will neither talk nor eat nor work. I do not understand it."

That night, when we landed again, we put up our mosquito nets on the sandbar. We had profited from our experience on the mail bags, and meant to sleep like the Indians. The bar was long and narrow, a thin strip of sand bordered by a thick growth of wild cane. The occupants of the other canoe had seen a jaguar here just before we landed, but even a jaguar seemed less prejudicial to sleep than did those mail bags.

It was some time during the night that I was awakened by the crunching of twigs back in the jungle. I listened. It could be made only by a large animal of some kind, and it was approaching the spot where I lay. My revolver had become lost in a tangle of blankets, and as I hunted for it, I could hear the crunching at the very edge of the cane thicket.



Before I could untangle the weapon, a monster twenty-five feet high and twice as wide—these are the dimensions as they appeared to me at the time—stepped out of the cane and fell over my mosquito net. The monster grunted, and I yelled. By the time I gained my feet, revolver in hand, it had fled, crashing awkwardly away through the jungle. I fired wildly in its direction, not because I had any hope of hitting it—I had to do something warlike after that yell.

“What’s the matter?” demanded the startled missionaries, coming out from under their own nets.

“Nothing. Just chasing a tiger or something. I hit him and he ran.”

With the aid of the Rev. Mr. Herbert’s flashlight we examined the tracks in the soft sand. They were neat, three-toed marks.

“Only a tapir,” said Rivera.

The tapir is a clumsy brute, big but harmless, and an easy prey to other animals. The Indians kill it with a spear. It is quite common in these parts, and frequently blunders into a camp. Considering its clumsiness, the surprising thing about it is that it has not been exterminated, for its meat is considered a great delicacy both by jaguars and by the Indians.

The third day brought us into the neighborhood of the cannibal Cashivos. Occasional expeditions of Peruvian soldiers have driven these Indians away from the river, but thirty miles back

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in the forest, they are said to continue their old tribal custom and to observe the old favorite diet, —when they can get it.

Fortunately they are a degenerate, cowardly tribe, and never attack either white men or their Indian neighbors. They are said to wear no clothing, not even a breech-clout, and build themselves no shelters, not even a lean-to of palm thatch. They cultivate no food, as do the Chunchos and most of the other interior tribes, but live merely on yucca root or such game and fish as they can obtain with their spears and arrows. Cannibalism they practice only among themselves, killing and eating the aged members of the tribe, whom they prepare for the table by wrapping in banana leaves and roasting in the ashes.

In vain we scanned the jungle-grown banks of the river to see them. We were now on the Pachitea River, swelled by new tributaries until it was two or three hundred yards wide in places, but the tangle of cane, palms, and big trees draped with vines, was still the same.

“They never come down to the river,” explained Rivera. “Their costume makes them too popular with the mosquitos.”

The word “mosquito,” as used in this country, refers to a little gnat, extremely numerous and troublesome on the Pachitea. The same thing in Brazil is known as the “pium fly.” It leaves little red blood-spots where it bites, which turn black in a few hours and resemble blackheads. These remain on the skin for a week or more, and

MOST OF OUR HUNTING WAS DONE  
BY TORPIRO



TORPIRO SPEARS A FISH





never cease to itch. The trouble is that they never start to itch until the gnat has finished biting and flown away, making revenge difficult.

Even when in the canoe we kept under our mosquito nets. These gave us some protection, although the insects were so small that they could sometimes go through the mesh. The little fellows seemed to go through and pull the big ones in after them. But once inside, they apparently felt trapped, for instead of biting us they sought to get out again.

When we stopped for lunch, however, there was no defense. The gnats rose in swarms from the sand and hovered about us in clouds. In waving our hands before our face we struck down hundreds of them, but other hundreds immediately took their places. They were as thick as the particles of dust in a sandstorm. They got into the nose and into the mouth. Our hands would be black with them. Our faces, when we had finished lunch and crawled back under our nets, looked as though we suffered from the pox.

During the afternoon we passed a group of *chacras*, or small farms. Apparently the half-breed colonists who lived here felt little concerned by their proximity to cannibals. Nevertheless, when Captain Rivera landed to make our camp for the night, we noticed that he selected the bank farther from the Cashivo territory.

But the only thing that disturbed us was a little night ape, who came out on a branch above our camp and threw twigs at us all night.

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These tiny owl-faced monkeys sleep in hollow trees during the day, coming out only after dark. We wished to see the ape, but when we looked for Herbert's electric flashlight, we could not find it. He had placed it just outside his mosquito net not half an hour before.

We looked at the Indians suspiciously. They were all sleeping, except Menichi, who sat beside the fire, picking his toes.

"He hasn't brains enough to steal it," said Herbert, and I agreed.

But the flashlight was gone.

The mail canoes had left Bermudez with few provisions—a little rice, sugar, and cocoa—yet none were needed. Game was plentiful. It was not an unusual thing for us to bag six or more wild turkeys before breakfast.

This pre-daybreak part of the journey was always interesting—gliding through the mist, shooting rapids in the dark, howled at by howling-monkeys we could not see. Once in a while, however, as the morning light began to dawn, we caught sight of the creatures, at the top of some bare tree, trying to warm themselves in the first rays of the sun. Sometimes when they sighted us they howled louder, but usually they ceased their noise to climb higher, the little ones clinging to the mothers' backs as they ascended.

We were passing through nature's own zoölogical garden. Twice we disturbed a capybara at her bath. The capybara, called "ronsoco" in



this part of South America, is the largest of the rodents—a huge, fat creature resembling a brown pig.

Sometimes we came upon families of otters in the river. The Indians would cease paddling to make loud sucking sounds imitative of the animal's own noise, inducing them to approach. They would swim toward us, their silky brown necks stretched out of water, but always before they came within effective pistol range, they would take fright and dive. The Indians never used their shotguns on distant or moving targets. As we ascended to deeper waters, we began to see a curious porpoise-like creature, which the Indians called a "buefo." It would circle around the deep pools, its back above water, snorting and throwing up spray, sometimes leaping into the air. Some of them were black, but most of them were streaked with flesh-pink. The head and snout resemble a pig's. In fact, the buefo resembles a cross between a hog and a codfish, but is said to be a descendant of the salt water porpoise, which has made its way slowly up the broad Amazon into the tributaries, changing its characteristics as it came higher into the new waters.

Alligators or crocodiles were few. The now receded floods of the last rainy season had carried most of them inland and left them there, the Indians told us. Yet once in a while in the late afternoon we saw one, usually a young one, sunning itself on the mud bank. They seemed quite

unafraid of us. One little slate-gray fellow, lying on a rock, let us float past within twenty feet of him, watching us with curiosity, but without fear.

Most of our hunting was done by a little Indian paddler named Torpiro. He was a slender, wiry little fellow, cat-like in his movements, and a natural-born scout and hunter. When not hunting to supply our mess, he did it for amusement. At night he would borrow the lantern, wander down the river bank a short distance, and return a few minutes later with the pockets of his ragged breeches filled with frogs, birds, birds' eggs, lizards, and similar things. At every landing of the canoe during the daytime, he would take a bow and arrow, and shoot fish. For several minutes he would stand motionless on a rock, an arrow in place, his bowstring stretched, his sharp eyes searching the murky water. Suddenly the string would twang. Sometimes the arrow would stick in the mud bottom or float empty to the surface, but usually it would move out into the stream, wiggling furiously. Then Torpiro would pull off his trowsers—he wore no other garment—and plunge in after the arrow, to bring it back with a fish attached.

Occasionally he brought back a man-eating paña, or piranha, as it is better known in Brazil. This little fish, seldom over a foot in length, will savagely attack men or animals who venture into a stream, particularly if they are wounded and

the water is stained with blood. Ordinarily the Indians bathe without fear of them, but a man with an open sore stays out of the paña-infested waters. The fish is peculiar in that it has a tongue. Also it has a strong set of teeth and a grip like a bulldog when it bites. If we caught one with hook and line, we had to pry its mouth open with a machete to remove the hook.

It was on our fifth day that we found new game. Our fourth day had passed with only one incident of importance. We had stopped for breakfast near a little *chacra* where the half breed settler gave us the cheerful information that the expected launch was awaiting us a few miles below. The Indians had pushed on joyously, only to learn upon reaching the spot, that the launch's crew, fearful lest the rapidly lowering river leave them stranded, had gone on downstream in search of deeper water.

Our fifth morning found us, therefore, still in canoe, setting out at 3 A. M., in the foggy moonlight. Day had barely begun to break when the Indians suddenly stopped paddling to listen. Among the trees on the bank we heard a chattering noise.

"Monos!" whispered Torpiro.

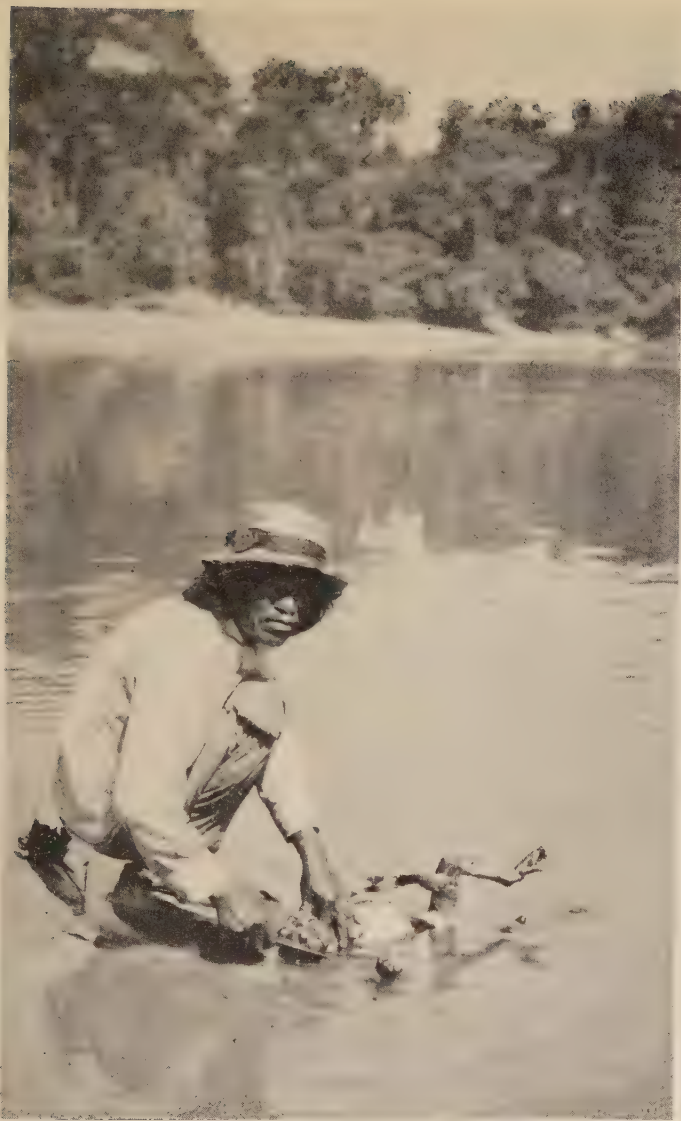
We paddled in to shore, and scrambled out of the canoe. The trees above us were full of large gray monkeys, who swung from branch to branch in their flight as the shot guns began to crack. Some of them dropped; some of them, although killed, became lodged in the branches.

I had heard startling stories of the ferocity of big monkeys when attacked. Back in Bermudez a man while wandering alone through the woods had shot and wounded one. The creature had leaped upon him from the tree top, and in its last dying effort, had taken a large bite out of the calf of his leg. Another man, on another occasion, had wounded one of several monkeys swinging in a chain above him. As the injured creature shrieked aloud with pain, the whole family broke their line, swinging to the ground and attacking the man with fury. He had fled back to the settlement, where it took the whole population with clubs to drive the animals away.

Perhaps these were only stories, or possibly the monkeys we met were of a less aggressive species and frightened by our number. They were not the red ones that howl so terribly, but a silver gray variety. Their only idea seemed to be to escape.

As the first one fell to the ground, a most surprising change came over Menichi. With a queer gurgling laugh, the hideous old Indian leaped from the canoe. His sore toes were forgotten. He rushed up the bank like a young boy, seized the fallen monkey, and raced back to the water's edge to clean it. Before the rest of us were back from the chase, he had it scraped and cleaned, and was joyously roasting it over a fire.

To suggest continuing our journey was to invite a mutiny. There was no moving on until the feast was over. Led by old Menichi, the Indians



BEFORE THE REST OF US WERE BACK FROM THE CHASE  
HE HAD IT SCRAPED AND CLEANED





prepared to eat the monkeys. Menichi was the life of the party. When we photographed the group, he set up one of the creatures, stuck a fork and knife in its hands, placed his battered straw hat on the animal's head, and then to complete his own picturesque make-up, he posed with a turkey bone between his pointed teeth.

It was a gruesome feast. The monkeys, with their coat of fur singed off, looked like human babies. Out of curiosity I tried the meat. It tasted rather like pork, and was not at all bad, although any one with imagination must feel like a cannibal when eating it. Even jaguar and tapir are eaten in this country. The vaca marina, or sea cow, which is found in the larger tributaries of the Amazon, is held in disdain by the natives, but was recommended by two American explorers I met as the most delicious thing they had ever tasted. Crocodile meat is said to be excellent, while the iguana, the ugliest reptile I have ever seen, is considered a great delicacy in the tropics. After all it is a matter of custom. I showed the Indians a picture of a lobster, and they were shocked to learn that any one could eat such an ugly thing.

When we finally set out again on our journey, Menichi discarded the two inch paddle he had been using, selected the largest one he could find, and worked like a demon. Occasionally he would pause to renew his enthusiasm with another bite of monkey, which he carried with him as a child might carry a lollypop, after which he bent to his

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paddling with all his might. We fairly flew down the river. As he paddled, he cracked jokes in a queer dialect, which kept the other Indians in paroxysms of mirth, and finally he even burst into song—a strange monotonous chant in a weird minor key.

The stream was full of rapids, and our heavily laden canoe frequently shipped water, soaking the mail and ourselves. In places, we scraped across the rocks on the shallow bottom, the dug-out threatening to stick there, but always picked up by the swift water and carried on. The shallowness of the river suggested that it would be many days before we encountered the expected launch.

Personally, my missionary companions and I were beginning to find the journey uncomfortable. The mail upon which we sat was beginning to feel extremely hard. We chafed under the forced inactivity of remaining motionless in a canoe day after day. Although it is contrary to the traditions of the country for white men to do any kind of menial labor, we took the paddles from the Indians and paddled ourselves for the exercise.

The mosquitos grew thicker as we descended. We were already covered with their bites. When we ate our lunch they swarmed about our faces in such clouds that we could not help eating mouthfuls of them. I seriously thought of removing my shoes and stockings in the hope that half of

them would be attracted to my feet, thus reducing the number that hovered about my mouth.

Up to our sixth day we suffered only from the little mosquitos—the gnats—which bite only during the hours of daylight. Now, however, we began to find what the natives call *sancudos*, the real mosquitos, which bite day or night with equal enthusiasm. We had taken our last bath the night before. Now it would be impossible—or at least extremely unpleasant because of the great number of *sancudos*.

When we landed on our sixth night, we set up our mosquito nets with extreme care before cooking dinner. Throughout the meal we fought the pests. It was an unhappy meal for all of us, particularly for the missionaries, who were debarred by their profession from using profanity. Even the Indians were beginning to lose their good nature. The monkeys were now reduced to heads and shoulders, resembling little busts of Julius Cæsar, except for the long tails, which were always left on until the last to be used as handles.

We were washing the dishes, when a lantern appeared around a bend in the river. Another lone colonist was coming to see us. He proved to be a German, and like most of the Germans I have met in Latin America, he spoke English as well as Spanish. With him, in his canoe, was a native woman.

“Is the lady your wife?” I asked.

I should have used more tact. This is always

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a delicate question in the tropics. But he was not embarrassed.

"No," he replied. "My wife is in San Francisco. This is my companion."

We sat about the campfire until late into the night, keeping always in the smoke to avoid the mosquitos. I was glad I had taken the precaution to arrange my sleeping-net during the daylight. What was my surprise when I climbed under it, after the colonist had departed, to discover that half the mosquitos in that part of Peru had already entered it and were waiting for me. The other half came in shortly afterwards. How they did it, I don't know, but they did. There was not a hole or opening of any kind in the net, but the mosquitos were there. For hours we bit and scratched and scratched and bit in furious combat, the mosquitos doing the biting while I did the scratching.

Also, to add to the situation, some jaguar brought her cub down through the woods to see us. We had heard jaguars around our camp on several occasions, and once in the morning we found their tracks within a few feet of our sleeping nets, but this was the first time we saw them. The firelight reflected clearly from two pairs of eyes staring at us from the jungle. Evidently the cub did not like us, and said so in kittenish whimperings. The mother reassured him with a deep throaty growl that seemed to say:

"All right, if you don't like them, mother will

show you how to make mince-meat out of the whole gang of them.”

To have shot and merely wounded her was to invite a calamity. The Indians hurled blazing sticks of firewood at her, and she finally went away with her offspring, slowly, and with much dignity—still growling.

Next, it rained. Possibly our interest in the animals had prevented us from observing the clouds which closed blackly under the starry tent above us. There came a sudden crash of thunder, and all heaven fell upon us in liquid form. The Indians, skilled in the lore of the forest, built themselves a shelter of palm leaves in less than a minute. We gringos sat on the beach and let it rain. We were in such a state of mind, that it mattered nothing in our young lives if it also hailed, snowed, thundered, lightened, blew the jungle down or anything else. I think we would have welcomed a few additional earthquakes, landslides, cloudbursts, blizzards, hurricanes, or even a volcanic eruption. The Rev. Dr. Oliver wrapped himself in his coat and sang, “When the Roll is Called up Yonder I’ll be There.”

The next morning, as we sat in the canoe in our wet clothes, we turned a bend in the river, and came unexpectedly upon the long-hoped-for launch.

It was a funny, squatty little steam launch, with a wheel in the bow and a tiny store room in



the stern, a cook stove and the engine in between, and all the remaining deck space covered with firewood and assorted junk. But it looked like the *Mauretania* to us.

The mail was deposited in tiny holds fore and aft, the canoe was hitched alongside, the bells were rung and whistles blown, and we were off. The cook, an English-speaking Barbadian negro, brought out the soap-box which constituted the table, and served lunch.

"What are you doing so far from home?" Oliver asked him.

He winked.

"Most of us foreigners in these parts is here because we has to be, sah, an' we ain't telling why nor wherefore."

After the slower gliding of the canoe, we seemed to be racing down the river. Late in the afternoon we came out into the broader Ucayali, where a larger steam launch was awaiting us, moored to the bank. It had been waiting there for us for eight days.

Lashed to the launch was a big double-decked lighter, for which the launch acted as a tug. There were twelve passengers aboard, waiting to return up-river in the canoe we had just left. Four of them were women, and two of them had babies. After their eight days of idle waiting here, they were to pack themselves into the dug-out in which we three men had considered ourselves rather crowded, and were to ascend that river! It had taken us seven days coming down



with the current; it would take them three times as long to go upstream. Furthermore, both their launch and our canoe had exhausted all provisions. We, on our farther descent aboard the launch, would be approaching civilization where we could procure food; they, plunging into the wilderness, had only Torpiro's shotgun between them and hunger!

We all ate together on board the lighter—finishing the last of the provisions. It was a gloomy sort of meal—with the feeling of foreboding in the atmosphere. The passengers were happy at the end of their long wait, yet a little fearful of the journey before them. But not one suggested turning back. As I watched the women, my respect for Latin-American womanhood increased. Until then I had pictured the Latin woman as a useless ornament—a beautiful, but indolent creature—a pet with no great depth of character. But these women, and they were women who had always enjoyed the comforts of city life, were embarking with grim determination on a trip that few men undertake!

It was after supper, when the mail was being transferred between the launches, that we said farewell to Captain Rivera.

"The only thing I regret," said Dr. Oliver, "is that we saw none of the cannibal Cashivos."

Rivera laughed:

"We had one right in the canoe with us—old Menichi."

"Menichi?"

"Yes. You know that the Cashivos eat their old people? Two years ago Menichi's tribe held a meeting to vote whether or not they should eat him. He escaped, made his way to the river, and became a paddler. For two years he has been working for me, and he is a good worker so long as there is plenty of monkey to eat."

We wanted to have another look at Menichi, but could not find him.

"He slipped away when we first took the launch," said Torpiro.

In the excitement, we had not noticed his departure.

"But why?" demanded Herbert.

"I think, señor, he was afraid you would ask for the flashlight you gave him."

That explained the disappearance of Herbert's pocket torch.

I sometimes think about the old Indian. Did he go back to the Cashivos, carrying that new-found white man's magic, to pose as a great medicine man before his tribesmen, and to escape the fate of being eaten by frightening the superstitious savages? And if he did, what will happen when the batteries give out?

We watched the little launch grow smaller on its up-river journey, its tiny deck crowded with passengers and their baggage. They would make camp in the dark that night on some sandbar, as we had camped, among the mosquitos and

the jaguars and the tropic rain, and would do so for many a night to come.

Our own tug backed the lighter away from the bank. As we got under way, the two parties exchanged salutes, the whistles screaming a shrill farewell. We ourselves still had a week on the river before we reached Iquitos and the Amazon, but after the canoe trip, the roomy lighter would represent comparative comfort.

“Well, our troubles are over,” said Oliver complacently.

Just then there came a jolt that nearly overturned us, while a shower of sparks from the tug’s funnel swept across the deck. We had run upon a sandbar.

“Blow the whistle,” shouted the little Peruvian commandante. “Call the other launch back to pull us off!”

Our whistle screamed. Far up the river, where the little lights of the other vessel were now only barely discernible, there came an answering toot, in acknowledgment of what they took to be a final farewell. Then, slowly their lights melted into the black of the tropic night.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### DOWN THE UCAYALI TO THE AMAZON

**O**PERATING a steam launch on the upper branches of the Amazon presents a unique problem in navigation at any time.

During the rainy season, when all tropical rivers become raging torrents, huge trees are carried into the stream with the falling of the inundated banks, to sweep down with the swift current like so many toothpicks, threatening with destruction the little vessels that dare to invade the raging waters.

During the dry season, when the rivers become shallow brooks, a long succession of rocks and sandbars and snags replace the whirling logs, and are equally difficult to avoid. No charts are made of the river's course to aid the native pilot, and if any were made they would only mislead him, for not only do the sandbars change position overnight, but even the river itself, by washing down one bank and piling up new soil on the other side, is apt to move itself a few hundred yards in either direction. There are many cases on record where one of these streams has cut itself a brand new course through the jungle, miles distant from the old one.

Our diminutive Peruvian commandante gave us a long dissertation on the temperamental habits of the Amazonian rivers while we sat on the top deck of the lighter and watched the little wood-burning tug-launch strain to back us off the sandbar upon which we had run.

He was very apologetic. This sandbar had not been here eight days before when he came up the river. It had been fully a quarter mile distant from its present location. He knew, because he had run upon it then, and had been stuck for several hours. Now our situation was worse, for we were going downstream, and the current behind us was pushing us deeper into the sand.

He was a very congenial young fellow, our commandante, although his almost total lack of a chin gave us little confidence in his capacity for the captaincy of a vessel in distress. Evidently, as is usual in Latin America, he had gained his position through family connections. He was unmistakably a member of the local aristocracy. The fact that he wore pajamas both day and night proved this fact, for on the upper Amazon or its tributaries this is the infallible mark of the nobility.

"On this very sandbar, señores," he told us, "two launches have been lost within the past year, with twenty-eight persons killed—either drowned or eaten by alligators. But do not be alarmed."

There was little danger of our big clumsy scow overturning. What alarmed us was a scarcity

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of provisions. According to an inventory taken by the little commandante, our stock of food consisted of twenty-seven green bananas. Divided among three passengers, one captain, and sixteen Indian members of the crew, these would not provide very sumptuous dining, particularly if we should be stuck here for two or three weeks, where there was little likelihood of any other vessel's finding us.

But our forebodings were not realized. After two hours of chugging and puffing, the tug worked us loose, and we went careening down the river again through the black night.

A few hours' ride below was the town of Masisea. We had not seen more than the isolated shack of a half-breed settler for over a week, and were anxious to see Masisea. On our map it appeared in large black letters. Possibly the map maker had hesitated to leave so much blank space in the interior of South America and had printed Masisea in larger print than it deserved, for when we reached there, some time after midnight, there was nothing to be seen except a high mud bank. Following one of the Indian sailors with a lantern along a winding path, we finally came to the village, but it consisted only of half a dozen bamboo houses. The sailor had come for the mail. A sleepy but aristocratic postmaster—he also wore pajamas—gave him two letters for Iquitos, and we retraced our steps. Masisea, like Puerto Bermudez, is a frontier wireless station established by the Peruvian government.





AN INDIAN HOME



A TYPICAL SCENE ALONG THE UCAYLI



As we continued our journey, we became accustomed to hitting sandbars. The native pilot's system is to watch the two banks, and steer close to the steeper. He finds deep water with something akin to instinct, but every once in a while he guesses wrong. Frequently our lighter would bump and lurch and turn half around, carrying the tug with it, only to break loose again and continue its mad career down the river. Sometimes it struck head on, and a shower of sparks came flying from the tug's funnel, while crew and passengers turned somersaults across the deck. Then would follow a period of pulling and straining on the part of the tug, while the little commandante tore his hair and shouted orders at every one in sight, to which no one paid any attention. Usually we were off within an hour, and racing away just as wildly into the night.

Toward morning it became frightfully cold. To any reader not acquainted with the tropics, this sounds surprising as a description of Amazon weather. The Amazon is supposed to be hot. In the day time it lives up to its reputation, but the nights are cool, and when one is traveling at express-train speed down a broad river against the wind, and trying to sleep in a cord hammock on an unprotected upper deck, the nights are not merely cool, but genuinely cold. Before day-break we were all below, sitting next to the engine on the tug, trying to warm ourselves.

The Ucayali River, upon which we were travel-

ing, is about half a mile wide at its beginning where it is formed by the Alto Ucayali and Pachitea Rivers. Its banks are low, and thickly forested. There are, however, many clearings and houses of cane and thatch, where colonists have settled to plant cotton. Before the fall of rubber, the Ucayali and the other streams of the region were visited only by *caucheros*, or rubber gatherers. The slump in that industry has turned these *caucheros* into settlers, and has resulted in the colonization of the Ucayali until it is now more thickly populated than the Amazon itself. We had no difficulty the next morning in replenishing the launch's provisions with yucca root and turtle meat.

During the afternoon we struck the first large village, Pucalpa, a place of 600 inhabitants. It is scattered over so much territory, with so many of its habitations hidden back in the jungle, that it appears smaller. We stopped here to take on three passengers—a bridal couple and a bull. The last-named passenger objected to crossing the unsteady board which served as a gangplank. As usual, whenever anything was going wrong, every one called for Felipe. Felipe was a stocky little Indian, not over five feet in height, but almost equally wide, with muscles like a blacksmith. Whenever we stopped for firewood, this short but powerful fellow would carry twice as many sticks in one load as any two other men put together. Now he merely stepped up to the bull, gave him a shove, and the bull walked meekly aboard.

Pucalpa was a brand new village. Three months before, the old Pucalpa had been entirely destroyed by the river, which had overflowed its banks, killing cattle and ruining crops. But a village is easily constructed in this country, consisting as it does of cane and thatch, and requiring no other tool than a machete for its construction. Even the jungle about it grows up in a few weeks. Only a shortage in food remained to tell the story of Pucalpa's calamity.

When we saw the town, it was standing high and dry above a thirty-five-foot bank. The Amazonian tributaries have a rise and fall of about forty feet between seasons.

The rivers conform to no laws of geography. Here at Pucalpa, the Ucayali had several times changed its course. Five years ago the river was a mile distant from the town. Inhabitants pointed out its old course, now dry and covered with verdant forest. Later in the day we stopped at a cotton plantation where the planter's home hung half-way over the bank, threatening at any moment to topple into the river. When it was built, six years before, the planter told us, it was several hundred yards from the water. He was now building himself a new house half a mile back, but he supposed that eventually he would have to move again, unless the river, through one of its freaks, should start moving in the other direction.

That night, while we were anchored at Chancay, another group of thatched huts, we saw the

river in action. We had stopped for wood—we always stopped for wood about twilight when the mosquitos were biting along the bank—but a heavy rainstorm made it dangerous to run during the night. Suddenly we heard a great crashing up the river—a noise like a landslide, but accentuated by the sound-carrying water, until it became like the booming of huge breakers on a stormy coast.

“*Tierra cahida!*” exclaimed the commandante.

The famous *tierra cahida* of the Amazonian rivers is a wholesale inundation of the river’s banks. The swift stream is always undermining the soft soil of its borders, until at last, under the force of a heavy storm, a piece of the land with its tremendous weight of trees, slides into the water. The waves created by the huge landslides cross and recross the river, starting the overhanging banks of the other side, until whole acres of forest are falling. It may continue for hours.

Our commandante was greatly excited, at one minute planning to abandon the launch, again preparing to get under way before the *tierra cahida* reached us. But finally, the crashing ceased, to give place only to echoes, and the little Peruvian breathed more easily.

“The saints be praised,” he murmured. “Do not be alarmed, señores.”

Despite the colonization along the Ucayali, one still finds many primitive Indian villages along the line. Most of them are merely groups of tem-



porary shelters built by some wandering band of turtle hunters. They are usually lean-tos of palm-leaves, just high enough for sleepers to crawl under. Occasionally a thin trail of blue smoke indicated that the village was inhabited, but the majority appeared deserted. At times, we saw the natives spearing *charapa*, or turtle. The men, and often the women also, go out in pairs, one paddling the canoe, while the other sits in the bow with a harpoon. The harpoon is made usually from the hard black wood of the ivory palm, a wood almost as hard as metal. A detachable head, probably of bone, is fastened with thirty or forty feet of stong cord from the fiber of pineapple leaves. When a turtle is speared, he dives, but the harpoon-handle, floating on the surface, marks his course, and he is easily captured.

When we stopped for wood near one of these Indian villages on the morning after the *tierra cahida*, the Rev. Mr. Herbert and I seized our cameras, and ran out to get some pictures. The little commandante ran after us to get into the picture. Above all things, the Latin American loves to be photographed. I have never yet aimed my camera at anything in the Spanish countries without having from ten to forty persons—some of them grown men—group themselves artistically in the immediate foreground and look pleasant. Back in Lima it once took me a week to get a picture of the Cathedral without having a crowd on the steps.

Indians, as a rule, are just the opposite. Even when they understand that the photographic apparatus is not a machine gun, they have a superstitious belief that the operation will bring them bad luck unless the photographer gives them half a dollar.

The Indians here, however, had no superstitious scruples, and lined up obediently but wonderingly, as we directed them. They belonged to a tribe called the Chamas. The men wore ragged civilized clothing, but the women still wore the one-piece brown garment. None of the women appeared to be over fourteen years of age, although they all had babies. Herbert and I took turns holding the commandante while the other snapped the picture. After we had exhausted our films, and returned to the boat, the group was still standing as we had arranged it, wondering what it was all about.

On board the lighter, captain and crew wished to see the pictures. Their ideas of photography were based on the work of the tintype man, who is very numerous in any South American city, and who had even come up the Amazon as far as Iquitos. Whenever I have taken a picture in Peru, the natives have immediately demanded to see a copy, and upon my replying that it won't be ready for several days, they feel that I am extremely unobliging.

The Indian village we had visited was a permanent village, not a temporary turtle camp. Its houses, although consisting only of roofs with-

out any side walls, were large and roomy. Their furnishings were very simple, however, consisting of nothing more than a mat of palm leaves, with a few earthenware jars and a bow and arrows scattered about.

The average Peruvian settler in this country lives quite as simply as the Indians. Of course, there is a high percentage of Indian blood even in those who call themselves white. Their houses are no more attractively furnished than the Indian huts. They themselves are apt to be as ragged and barefooted as the natives, and just about as brown, although more likely to be yellow and sallow-cheeked from fever. The white man, who attempts to live like an Indian, usually lives worse.

Our third day brought us to Contamana, the second most important town in the Peruvian montaña. Contamana has a population of 2,000, but is strung out on two parallel streets along the river for nearly a mile. We arrived there at 3 A. M., when the town was still asleep. As usual, the most progressive people there were the Chinese merchants, who immediately arose and opened their stores.

Contamana resembles a Brazilian town rather than a Peruvian, which is not surprising, considering that the province of Loreto, although a part of Peru politically, has no commercial relations with the rest of the republic from which it is effectually isolated by the Andes and a long stretch of unbroken jungle. The roofs of Conta-

mana were usually of tin, while the walls of the building were of boards, and in some cases had been painted.

There was an American university professor here, catching fish in the interests of science. He had been here for several weeks, trying to get a canoe and boatman to take him out on the river. Bartering had become the custom to such an extent that the natives had almost forgotten the value of money, and he could offer no inducement sufficient to attract boatmen. The people were poverty-stricken, but too lazy to work.

There was also another American in town—the sort of fortune-hunter upon whom one occasionally stumbles in the tropics. Five years before, while rambling across the continent, he had encountered an old Indian woman near Contamana who somehow had obtained a handful of gold nuggets. She refused to tell where she had found them. The American was not to be balked. He settled right there, started a *chacra*, or small farm, and employed the old woman as his housekeeper. His idea was to win her confidence. Now, five years later, she was still his housekeeper, but had steadily refused to tell her secret.

“But I’m making progress,” he said. “She’s opening up more and more every day. In another six months, I’ll be a millionaire.”

I have since wondered whether she caught the smallpox and died with her secret unrevealed.

At Contamana the bull left us. The bride

and groom, our only remaining passengers, were going to Iquitos on their honeymoon. Both were barefoot, and traveling second-class.

The difference between first and second class is that the first-class passengers were fed, while the others had to "rustle their own grub." The bridal couple had brought with them a large bunch of green bananas, which they roasted by stringing on a piece of wire, and hanging them down the smokestack of the tug to be cooked in the steam from the engine. It was interesting to see them string the bananas—they usually picked them from the bunch with their toes to save the effort of stooping. All these natives, going barefoot from infancy, are as dexterous with their feet as with their hands. Sailors in scaling a post to the upper deck, would wrap their large toes around the rail as though they were using their fingers.

Both bride and groom seemed very happy, especially the bride, who was wooed enthusiastically not only by the groom but by all the half-breed Indians in the crew. She had never been away from the thatched *chacra* in the wilderness where she was born, although the groom had twice been to Contamana and once to Iquitos, which to all the inhabitants of these rivers is in a class with Paris. The bride was very modest, repelling the more armorous sailors and sometimes her own husband, by poking them in the eye gently with a green banana. After all, that



open top deck did not offer the privacy so dear to most brides.

At Contamana two new passengers joined us. They were a lieutenant of police with a negro prisoner. The negro was tied with a small rope, which seemed to be only symbolic of his captivity, for whenever he wished to walk the deck, he untied it himself. Having taken his walk, he returned and tied himself up again.

The officer carried no weapon of any kind, but was reputed to be an expert wrestler and boxer, something decidedly unusual among the fistless Latins. The Peruvians of the interior, however, as is apt to be the case among pioneers in a new and difficult country, I have found to be real "scrappers," more on the order of the Mexicans or Chileans. This officer watched his prisoner only when we were alongside the bank. In mid-stream he paid no attention to his charge.

"Can't he swim?" I asked.

The lieutenant smiled and nodded toward the murky water.

"Crocodiles," he said.

The man was being taken to Iquitos for trial. If convicted, he would be taken back past Contamana to Lima, over a month's journey, to be imprisoned. Such is still the system in Peru. The man was charged with attempting to kill a Chinaman.

"He ought to be imprisoned for not succeeding," remarked one of the sailors.

The Chinese, who are quite numerous in all the



Latin countries, are despised by the natives, although they are by far the more progressive. In any Latin-American village, from Mexico south, the neatest and best-stocked stores are run by Chinamen, while the natives themselves, if they do anything at all, probably squat on the sidewalk with only an apron-full of goods for sale.

At Orejones, our next stop, there was a little Chinese boy on the bank among several ragged native children. Our crew amused themselves by yelling "Chino!" at him. I could not help noticing that he was much neater in appearance than the half-naked Peruvian children.

While we stood at the rail, a well-dressed Peruvian came down to the water's edge, where the women of the town were lining the banks to wash clothes in the river. Without hesitation, he undressed himself and proceeded to take a bath, smiling most captivantly at the girls as he did so. Perhaps the Chinamen do not bathe at all; at least, they do not combine bathing with flirtation.

To the missionaries and myself, however, the natives of our crew were most attentive. One day they brought us handfuls of bugs, and were surprised when we did not rave over the insects. It seems that their last American passengers were naturalists, and the natives had leaped to the conclusion that all Americans were crazy about worms and butterflies.

They were always friendly. Our personal pos-

sessions always interested them. When off duty, they would sit around us in a group, asking how much I had paid for my wrist watch, for my safety razor, for my revolver, for everything I owned. No doubt these trifles represented great wealth to men who were earning less than fifty cents a day.

On our fourth day, they came to us with their faces shining.

"Around the next bend you shall see something."

They said this with great pride.

"See what?" inquired Herbert.

"A battleship."

A battleship here in this shallow stream, in the middle of the jungle, three thousand miles from the ocean! It sounded like nonsense, but we watched expectedly. As we turned the bend, all we could see was a launch about the size of our own, perched high and dry on top of a hill of sand in the center of the river.

It was in reality a Peruvian gunboat—if a machine gun in the bow of a steam-launch may constitute such—used in patrolling the rivers. During the end of the last flood season it had run upon a sandbar, just in time for the receding water to leave it atop a hill. Its crew was camping in improvised palm-leaf huts beside it, waiting for the next rainy season, when, if all turned out well, the Amazonian squadron of the navy would again be afloat.

A covered canoe, bearing an important-looking

official came out to join us. It proved to contain the Sub-Prefect of the district—a sort of vice-governor—who was on his way downstream for a few hours' journey and wanted a lift. Our little commandante was greatly excited by the honor of carrying His Excellency. Everything must be done with *éclat* while he was with us. The commandante's first move in the direction of *éclat* was to call the missionaries and me aside for a lesson in etiquette. Had we no silk pajamas to wear? No! Then would we kindly wear our coats at table? As there had been no ladies on board, we had been somewhat remiss in these matters, although our coming to the table had always been the occasion for a reproving stare from the little captain, who was always particular to wear his pink pajamas at these formal affairs, and who frowned with great disapproval at my khaki shirt.

Next, we rehearsed the ceremony of presentation. The captain was to say, "Oh, Mr. Sub-Prefect, here are three American gentlemen I should like to have the honor of presenting to Your Excellency." His Excellency would then come walking out from the cabin where he was now taking a shower bath, and we were to be presented in order of our importance, which would put me last—just after the lieutenant of police. The prisoner was not to be presented.

His Excellency's shower bath was a function in itself. In the back end of the lighter, behind the tiny cabin, was a small hole through the upper

deck. The Sub-Prefect stood under this, while a sailor on the roof above poured a bucket of water through the hole.

The commandante lamented the appearance of his craft. At every stop we had been taking on a cargo of dried fish, called *paiche*, in large, greasy, stinking bundles. The whole lower deck was now covered with it, until as we sat at the table, we had a wall of the smelly stuff for a back-rest. Its odor pervaded everything. To leave the table, one had to scale that wall of fish.

The commandante was also worried about the tablecloth. The only one he had was dirty with the filth of ages. We suggested changing it—taking it out and burying it. The plain boards of the table, if scrubbed, would be much more presentable, and certainly more sanitary.

He looked at us with pity in his eyes.

“Without a tablecloth, señores, how can His Excellency wipe his mouth?”

We had forgotten this South American custom of using the table cover as a napkin. The Latins, despite their courtesy elsewhere, are gross at the table. The captain was right.

A cough sounded from the cabin.

“Oh, Mr. Sub-Prefect,” exclaimed the commandante, “here are three American gentlemen I should like to have the honor of presenting to Your Excellency.”

The official came marching out in a newly-laundered suit of white linen, which looked the more remarkable here in the jungle, scaled the wall of

fish, and bowed deeply. Dinner was served. It was a very stiff affair, but we went through it without any breaks—except that I absent-mindedly helped myself to a turtle-egg before passing them to His Excellency and was rewarded with a cold stare from the captain. The Sub-Prefect seemed to be a pleasant and amiable gentleman, and had the good tact to pay no attention to the dirty tablecloth, wiping his mouth as though it were a clean one. Shortly after dinner we arrived at his destination, and bade him farewell with the usual embracing and slapping one another seven times on the left shoulder blade and seven times on the right.

*“Adios, señor Sub-Prefecto.”*

*“Adios, señor commandante.”*

He climbed over the fish, and was gone.

New tributaries had gradually swollen the Ucayali until it was about a mile wide. Also, it must have become deeper, for we spent an entire night without striking a sandbar. We were getting tired of the journey—chugging along day after day through a forest that was beautiful but always the same. There was little animal life to be seen. Once we beheld a tapir with her young, walking along a distant beach. Occasionally we saw garzas, the birds from which are taken the valuable egrets. The bird is not difficult to approach and shoot, but to be of any value, the feathers must be pulled from the live bird. The United States forbids their importation as a protest against cruelty to animals. The birds we



saw were in flocks from ten to a hundred, usually white with black-rimmed wings. Only the pure white ones are valuable.

The colonists have frightened away most of the animals. Some day they will also exterminate the fish. Many of the settlers along the Ucayali make their living by spearing the *paiche*—the fish which constituted our cargo. It is speared as it leaps from the water, with a harpoon similar to that used by the Indians in hunting turtle. After being dried for three or four days, it is put up in bundles, and sent to Iquitos. Despite its odor, it is quite palatable, and forms the principal article of diet along the Amazon and its tributaries.

Whole villages exist either for the capture of fish or turtles. In one of these villages I found a well-furnished home that contained a piano and similar luxuries. I have often read of palaces back in the jungle, where the millionaire rubber kings live with beautiful daughters, but this was the only near approach to it that I found. It could hardly be called palatial, and was not equipped with a beautiful daughter.

Its owner was a turtle king. We took on a cargo of live *charapa* here, and wherever space could be found among the bundles of fish, our deck became a scrambling mass of big turtles. Incidentally, we had turtle for dinner every day. It looks like beefsteak, but tastes more like veal. The cook baked it with characteristic Latin cruelty, knocking off the shell with an ax without taking the trouble first to kill it.



On our sixth day we left the main river and turned into a narrow channel called the Rio Puinahua. The Ucayali has many such side channels. This one was barely wide enough for our steamer, and was difficult to navigate, but it was a short cut to Iquitos.

The banks of the little stream were uninhabited, and the scenery was wonderful—a riot of light green banana trees against a dark green palm forest, with big trees, draped with vines, for a background. It was late afternoon—alligator time—and many of the big caymans were swimming in the river or lying half-submerged at the bank.

Usually the officer tied his prisoner tightly at nightfall, but this evening he only laughed.

“Let him escape if he dares,” he said.

Some time during the night we met an up-bound steamer of the same company to which ours belonged. The two ships tied up beside each other, while passengers and crew fraternized to ask after one another’s relatives down to the forty-first cousin.

Evidently the other vessel was well supplied with liquid refreshments, and shared them with our pilot. We had no sooner gotten under way again before we ran into a submerged tree. Its branches projected well above the water and could be easily seen; in fact, everybody on board saw them except the pilot, who headed straight for it and scored a bull’s eye. Lighter and tug turned half way around, careened as though

about to capsize, finally righted themselves, drifted broadside across the channel into the bank, then headed straight across the river and crashed into the opposite shore. But nobody seemed to care. The pilot tooted his whistle and away we went again.

On the morrow we were due to end our journey, and the whole crew was celebrating. To them Iquitos was one of the seven wonders of the world. Never having seen a larger city, they considered it second to Lima among the big cities of the world, with New York, London, and possibly Paris pushing it for second place. Of Lima, they had heard much from Peruvian travelers. One of these travelers had informed them that Lima contained as many as three hundred automobiles, most of which had been made by an American named Ford, but this was unbelievable.

They told us all about Iquitos. One of its streets, they said, was paved with something that looked like stone. One of its buildings had three stories, one on top of another. And the beautiful women! Oh, boy! or its Peruvian equivalent! They wore no rings in the nose like the Indian ladies of the jungle; instead, they soaked themselves in a violet-scented perfume that could be smelled a hundred yards away.

In the morning, having somehow lived through the night, we came to the junction of the Ucayali with the Marañon, forming the Amazon. From this point we were but eight hours run from Iquitos. The crew indulged in another celebration.



THE LIGHTER AND TUG ANCHOR THEMSELVES BY RUNNING UPON  
THE MUDDY BANK



IN THE DRY SEASON RAGING TORRENTS BECOME SHALLOW  
STREAMS



The sailors danced jigs all over the deck. Even the pilot left the wheel to stand on his head and wave his bare feet in the air.

No wonder we ran hard and fast on a sandbar.

This time we were lodged fast. All dancing stopped, while the crew worked feverishly to get us off. Each sailor evolved his own plan and worked with all his might, irrespective of what his neighbor was doing. The commandante perspired and tore his hair, and stuck out the part of his face where he imagined his chin to be, and screamed orders. No one listened.

After an hour or two, the launch worked itself loose. It had been lashed alongside the lighter. Some one, working out his own individual plan, cut the lashings, and the launch drifted down stream, leaving us behind. Some one threw them a rope, but it only became entangled in the propeller. By the time they had it untangled, the swift stream had carried the launch onto another sandbar.

"I told you so," shouted the commandante. "That's what you get for not listening to the one in charge."

The men on the launch stood and looked at us, and we looked back at them. The roar of the big river made conversation impossible. They shrugged their shoulders at the commandante, and he shrugged his shoulders at them.

"If we only had a canoe," moaned the official. We had no small boat of any kind. The cap-

tain had borrowed Dr. Oliver's watch to hang in the engine room in place of a ship's clock, but we had no life-raft to lend him. There was nothing to do, but wait for a turtle-hunter to come along in a dugout. He finally came, but on the other side of the river—two miles away. We watched him as he paddled leisurely along and threw his harpoon into the water. It was another hour before he realized our plight, and then it took him an hour to cross the swift river. Finally, by using his canoe, our sailors stretched a rope between the two boats. The tug worked itself loose, and pulled us off. Then a new problem presented itself—how to lash the two together again. Meanwhile we went drifting down stream, turning around and around in the whirlpools caused by the junction of the two rivers. Finally we landed on another sandbar, side by side.

"*Gracias á Dios!*" exclaimed the comandante, as the sailor lashed us together again. Then he scratched his head. We were stuck just as we were six hours earlier when we first ran aground, although we were half a mile nearer our destination.

Felipe, the strong man, came to the rescue. He leaped overboard into the stream, which was only waist deep here, and began to push. It was laughable that one man should hope to shove two iron vessels, loaded with tons of fish, passengers, and turtles. And then the miracle happened. I still believe it was a coincidence; the



engine must have worked us loose at the moment he began to push; but for some reason, we began slowly to move out into the stream. The husky little Indian climbed aboard in a matter-of-fact way, as though he had always known he could achieve this feat of strength, and off we went.

That evening, as we approached the docks of Iquitos, our commandante bade us farewell.

“There is one thing I have wanted to tell you, Señor Foster,” he said to me. “When dining with the Sub-Prefect, you should not have helped yourself to turtle eggs before offering them to him. You are not offended at my telling you this?”

I assured him I was not.

“*Adios, señor,*” he cried, and we embraced one another. Seven pats on the right shoulder and seven on the left.

“*Adios, amigo.*”

“*Adios.*”

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### IN PERU'S MOST ISOLATED CITY

OUR first glimpse of Iquitos did not fulfil the promises of our native boatman. It was night when our lighter tied up at the wharf. A few lights winked dismally at us from the high river bank, a few idlers on their way home from the cafés scrambled down to the dock to see who had arrived, a few slatternly half-breed women gathered to make dates with the crew; otherwise we made little impression upon the metropolis and the metropolis made little impression on us.

But presently a tall, broadshouldered Englishman pushed his way through the idlers and introduced himself as the British consul. He greeted all of us with a fair amount of cordiality, and upon learning that I was not one of the missionaries, his cordiality took on an added note of genuineness.

"I suppose I'm prejudiced against sky pilots," he told me confidentially. "Last time the Bishop of the Falklands was down this way, you see, I had to go down to welcome the jolly beggar. I said to him nicely, said I, 'Let me carry that suitcase for you, Your Excellency.' And he just

looked at me and said, said he, 'Young man, I'm not Your Excellency; I'm Your Reverence' So I said to the bally rotter, said I, 'Right-o, Your Reverence, carry your own suit-case and be damned.' "

The consul looked quite capable of saying what he pleased to whom he pleased. While in his dress he had copied the Peruvians with whom he dwelt, wearing a neatly pressed suit of spotless white linen that narrowed almost foppishly at the waistline, there was something typically Anglo-Saxon about his clean-cut jaw and close-cropped hair that defied all the tailors in Latin America to make him effeminate. And like all Englishmen abroad, although he had spent most of his life in foreign lands, he remained every inch an Englishman.

Griffis had wired him of our coming, he explained, and since in the absence of an American consul, he took it upon himself to look after Americans, he promptly gave a few curt orders to Indian boys to shoulder our baggage, while he himself led the way through a drizzling rain, along a winding grass-grown street to the Malecon Palacio, the three-story hotel of which our boatmen had boasted.

To our surprise, it did prove to be an excellent hotel, the cleanest and best-looking hotel I had seen in Peru. Another Englishman owned it, the consul explained. Built of tile, with corridors to which potted palms gave an air of comfort and luxury, it was everything that a hotel should be,

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except that there was not a clerk or bell-boy or other servant in sight.

The consul raised his voice in a bellow that could be heard across the broad Amazon:

“Don Juan! Carramba! Are you out filandering again when I bring guests here? Carramba! Don Juan!”

Don Juan, the appropriately-named manager and general factotum of the Palacio, *was* out filandering again. He emerged from the center of a group of native girls huddled under the sheltering eaves of a building around the corner, and came running through the rain to offer his apologies.

The consul saw that he gave us the best rooms in the place; then he bade us good-night. “If you need service,” he said, “look around for a crowd of barefooted women, and call for Don Juan. You can find him easily enough if you know how. See you later. Cheerio.”

In the morning the drizzle had given way to blazing equatorial sunshine, and in the bright light of tropical day, the reputed glories of Iquitos quickly vanished. Iquitos is one of those small South American towns which owe their prominence to the fact that the other towns in its vicinity are even smaller towns. It might be described as an Indian village which started out to become a city, and stopped when only half finished.

The port for the entire *montaña* region of Peru, and the head of big steamer navigation on the

Amazon, it ranked a few years ago as the second in importance among all the Peruvian ports. At that time, when the rubber industry was at its height, ocean liners considered Iquitos sufficiently important to warrant a 2,300 mile trip up the big river. Streets were laid out in the city, plazas built, splendid stores and warehouses constructed, and Iquitos prepared to be prosperous.

Then the rubber industry collapsed along the Amazon, because of the growth of British plantations in the Far East. British planters had taken the seed of the wild rubber tree from the South American jungles, and planted it in Ceylon, Java, Borneo, and the Malay Peninsula. When it bore fruit, the world's clearing house for rubber shifted from Pará and Iquitos to Singapore. Rubber still grew wild along the tributaries of the Amazon, but so great was the expense of gathering it and shipping it 2,500 miles or more to the Atlantic Ocean, that Peru and Brazil could no longer compete with the Orient. Wherefore at the time of my visit, the whole Amazon region was commercially dead, and of the whole region no place was deader than Iquitos.

The big stores and warehouses, built in the days of prosperity, were closed and boarded. The wide streets were overgrown with weeds. The only thing which distinguished the plaza as such was a rickety old band-stand falling slowly to pieces in the center of a barren field of grass, where on certain nights the local populace turned out to paddle in barefoot poverty.

This population, once numbering between twenty and thirty thousand, was now reduced to about twelve thousand, the others having migrated up rivers like the Ucayli to plant cotton. Ocean liners no longer made the long river journey to Iquitos. The only connection with the outside world was by the jungle trail over which I had come, or down the Amazon on the monthly flat-bottomed steamer of the Amazon River Steam Navigation Company, which made the journey merely because it was subsidized to do so by the Brazilian government.

From the river, Iquitos was fairly imposing. The riverbank was buttressed with a high stone wall, at the top of which was a long, wide avenue backed by attractive buildings of various-colored tile. And at one point along this "malecon," the Anglo-French colony had built a little cement plaza, with a statue and benches for the weary. But upon closer approach, the visitor observed that many of the attractive buildings were permanently closed, that the wide avenue was paved only for the space of one block, and that the rest of the street was used as a grazing ground for cows. While there were several motor vehicles in Iquitos, purchased by optimistic merchants in the days of the rubber industry, they never left the garage, for only one or two streets in the city were passable, and these only for a short distance.

On my first morning in Iquitos, I called upon the Prefect, or governor, of the Province of Loreto,



of which Iquitos is the capital. He was a short, rather dark-faced Peruvian gentleman, an intimate friend of President Leguia, and like the President, he spoke English fluently and correctly, as well as several other languages. For a man secluded in such an out-of-the-way post his range of knowledge of international affairs was amazing. He talked continuously for two hours on current events, human nature, the subliminal consciousness, Abraham Lincoln, Shakespeare, Babe Ruth, prohibition, eugenics, women's rights, Douglas Fairbanks, aviation, the Pope, Clemenceau, Carpentier, and the opportunities for Americans in Iquitos:

"Tell your American capitalists that the province of Loreto wants them," he cried enthusiastically. "We have not the money ourselves to develop this region. Our young men have not the technical training. We look to American capitalists to build railroads, to establish factories, to bring this country up to the advanced standard of your own."

I had called upon the Prefect to discuss a personal matter, and he knew it, and wishing not to discuss it, he talked fluently and interestingly on sixty different subjects, all with such grace and ease that when his aide came in to interrupt the interview, I felt flattered rather than offended. Griffis had informed me when I left Lima that a Peruvian cabinet minister had arranged my free transportation to Iquitos as a guest of the government. The letter provided me had merely direc-

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ted officials along the line to facilitate my journey, and despite the cabinet minister's assurance that no further pass was needed, both Captain Rivera and the commandante of the tug-launch had refused to recognize the letter as a pass. Payment of my passage had sadly reduced my funds, funds provided by Griffis under the belief that I should meet with few expenses. I had wired the Prefect from Masisea regarding the misunderstanding, and it was now my earnest desire to discuss it in person, but when at the end of the two hour interview the aide appeared to bow me out of the office, I had barely time to blurt out a question and learn that the Prefect was about to wire the Lima government.

One of the English residents of Iquitos to whom I described my interview, laughed uproariously.

"That's the old Latin-American device—passing the buck, as you call it in the States. He won't do a thing. Not a blessed thing. Not a blessed thing. He'll just tell you that Lima doesn't answer. He doesn't want to refund your passage money from the local treasury. Since rubber fell, there hasn't been enough money in the local treasury to pay his own salary. That cabinet-chappy in Lima passed the buck by giving you that letter, making himself solid with Griffis, and that sort of thing, and now the Prefect will pass the buck back to Lima by pretending to wire questions and all that, and they'll just kill time,

you know, until you get tired and move on—they'll make you think they're trying awfully hard to do the right thing, and they won't do a blessed thing at all. That's the Peruvian for you."

I next went to the wireless station, and sent an S. O. S. to Griffis, calling for funds to be wired to one of the two British banks in Iquitos. Griffis had always been prompt about answering such calls, and since another week would elapse before the monthly steamer was due, I did not worry about my predicament.

If both the local treasury and myself were very nearly "broke," it appeared that every one else in town was in pretty much the same situation. The upper-class Peruvians in Iquitos, after the manner of their fellow-countrymen in Lima, dressed in immaculate white linen and maintained an air of affluence, yet their pretense was even more apparent than the pretense of their brothers in the capital. They were too eager for work, and willing to work for trifling sums. Tailors came to our hotel with offers to make us suits of clothes in two days, an operation which required at least a month in Lima. Washwomen took our clothes and brought them back clean in a few hours, a process which required a week in Lima. So strenuous was the competition for what little trade was procurable that prices were ridiculously low. At the Malecon Palacio, which far surpassed the best hotel in Lima, we occupied magnificent rooms at a cost of a dollar a day.

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At the restaurants, of which there were a dozen excellent ones, we paid but seventy-five cents for dinners which would have cost four or five dollars in the capital. Everything in the whole city seemed to be run practically at a loss in order that it might keep on running.

The most striking indication of poverty, however, was furnished by the horde of native girls who solicited boatmen at the docks, and walked with alluring smiles in the plaza every evening, and even besieged transient guests at the Palacio, eager to earn a few centavos. Of course, prostitution is rampant anywhere in the tropics, where centuries of the Latin's rule over the Indian classes has not tended toward a moral uplift, but the condition seemed particularly acute in Iquitos.

The girls fairly swarmed in the evening, semi-Indian girls of all ages, with little physical attraction save that of youth, dressed in one-piece cotton garments of varying degrees of shabbiness, their eyes seeking customers. Iquitos boasted that it contained no assignation houses, nor did it require any. The girls would come to the little stone plaza fronting the malecon, and the eagerness with which they stared at our windows did not speak well for the habits of former gringo visitors. One wrinkled old woman would bring her fourteen year old daughter to the river embankment, and if we chanced to glance from our windows, would point to the child after the manner of an auctioneer.



THE RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM AT IQUITOS



THE HOTEL WHERE WE OCCUPIED MAGNIFICENT ROOMS FOR A  
DOLLAR A DAY





Most of these girls appeared to belong to the semi-professional class. They were largely workers from the cotton mill, or servants in the families of the upper-class Peruvians, trying to increase their scanty earnings by the sale of their virtue. Servants anywhere in Peru receive small pay. In fact, the time is not far distant, according to an old resident of Iquitos, when most of the servant girls there were practically slaves. Boatmen going up the smaller rivers after rubber or vegetable ivory would bring back Indian maidens and sell them for twenty or thirty pounds. The families purchasing a girl would take her before the Prefect, who officially proclaimed her the family's property. Usually the boatmen purchased these Indian maidens from the native tribe, although several cases are on record where they were taken by force. Naturally these maidens did not escape molestation from the boatmen on the journey to Iquitos, and now, grown to womanhood, they were going the path upon which they had been started.

Of course, one can not entirely blame the Peruvians for this condition, for the average male visitor to the region, no matter what his nationality, is pretty apt to take advantage of the situation. Possibly the most liberal patron of the native fair sex at the time of my visit to Iquitos was an Irishman whom I shall call Kelly, whose room on the top floor of the Palacio was such a mecca that one could hardly use the stairway without bumping into a procession of giggling barefooted

Indian girls racing to enjoy his hospitality. The English owner of the hotel, now in Europe, had left strict instructions with his manager that such practices were not to be countenanced in the establishment, but Don Juan's enforcement of decency was limited to his rushing out into the hall and warning the young ladies:

*"Silencio! Silencio! Please be more quiet!"*

Thereupon the young ladies would smile teasingly at Don Juan, and Don Juan, being a Spaniard, would soften, and pat each of them on the cheek, and the giggling, barefooted rush would continue.

A young Englishman in town, the employee of a local British firm, was suffering the penalty of misconduct with these girls. He had been keeping house with an Indian woman, but his infidelity to her had aroused her primitive jealousy; and she had poisoned his food with some mysterious herb known only to the Indians. The local Peruvian doctors could do nothing for him, and he was slowly dying a lingering death of the most horrible torture.

Neither Kelly nor the young Englishman, however, was typical of the permanent Anglo-Saxon colony. It was a small colony of respectable, business-like men, without any of the riff-raff that clings to the foreign colony in the more accessible cities. One of them, the man who owned the Palacio, had come to the district some twenty years before as a clerk at twenty-two dollars a month, and now owned not only the hotel but also

sixteen steamers on the Amazonian tributaries, besides having a monopoly on cotton, ivory nuts, and nearly all of the other jungle products with which Loreto is overflowing. Another Englishman ran the leading bank. Both of them, like the consul, were married. Even the several young bachelors who held minor positions in the few Anglo-Saxon firms were exceedingly well-behaved, and the limit of their dissipation consisted in gathering at a table before one of the restaurants and drinking *crème de menthe*, paying no attention to the dusky belles who hovered eagerly about them in one-piece cotton garments.

All of them agreed that their poisoned fellow-countryman had brought his misfortune upon himself, although all, with the consideration for a fellow-countryman that is characteristic of the smaller colony in a foreign city, did what they could for him. The consul took the sick youth to his own home.

"A beggar like him brings us all into disrepute," he said, "but you can't stand by and see him suffer."

All of the romance of Iquitos was not sordid, however. There was young Creighton, a rosy-cheeked youth just out from England, who called upon me to serve as interpreter in his courtship of a *señorita* of one of the better families. Creighton was an engineer bound for Kelly's gold mines on the Rio Napo, and waiting with no little impatience and disgust for Kelly to satiate himself with the attractions of Iquitos. And

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while waiting, Creighton fell a victim to the chaste albeit coquettish smiles of Carmelita.

"I can't go out alone with her," he complained to me. "Spanish custom, you know. But if you could walk around with her sister, it would be all right. Her sister's rather stout, blue mustache just sprouting on the upper lip, and all that, but it would be mighty decent of you."

"Huh!" said Kelly, who happened to be present. "What's the use? You'll only get into a mess. I know them people. Wink twice at a girl, and her old man comes around with a priest in one hand and a gun in the other, and wants to know whether your intentions are honorable. I know 'em."

But Creighton was insistent.

"I ought to practice Spanish," he explained, coloring slightly. "You understand, don't you?"

"Sure I understand. I understand perfectly. Only don't say I never warned you. I know the customs down here."

And so it became my regular routine to chaperone Creighton. Carmelita was a slender, delicate little girl, with smoldering dark eyes that lighted with a shy delight when she was with Creighton. Maria was as she had been described, at the age where Peruvian girls lose their beauty, and she was as bored with my company as I was with hers, both of us recognizing the fact that we were tolerating each other for the other couple's benefit, and both of us walking around the plaza together in bored silence. Creighton and Car-

melita, however, got along famously. Creighton's knowledge of Spanish was limited, but Carmelita chattered merrily, very proud that she had aroused the interest of the best-looking gringo in town.

And although her questions seemed at variance with her shyness, they were merely the questions which any innocent, convent-bred Spanish maiden will ask the young man she chances to meet.

"Are you married, señor?" she would ask.

Creighton would color slightly.

"No."

"Neither am I."

And after a blissful silence, interrupted only by the music of the military band in the plaza's decrepit band-stand:

"And you are not engaged to any one at home, señor,"

"No."

"Neither am I."

Creighton's answers were usually limited to "Yes" or "No." At least half the time, he confided to me, he had no idea what she talked about.

"You see, I don't like to appear a stupid ass," he explained. "But I can usually tell by her voice whether she expects 'Yes' or 'No,' and I like to please her. Jolly way she smiles when she's pleased. Rather nice little girl, altogether—eyes, nose, lips and hair and all that."

"How's the Spanish coming along?" demanded Kelly, when the tolling of the cathedral bell had



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brought Carmelita's watchful parents to reclaim her, and had left Creighton and me to join the other gringos at the table before the café.

"I had quite a bit of practice," said Creighton.

Kelly grinned sarcastically.

"Every time you passed here, you was practicing 'Yes' or 'No.' If you're going to run around with her, why don't you make a good job of it, and talk mush like she does. Tell her what a nifty little queen she is. They like that. I know 'em."

"I don't know enough Spanish," protested Creighton.

Kelly knitted his brows and chewed reflectively on a fat cigar.

"You might try, '*Usted es muy bonita.*' It only means, 'You're a little peacherino,' but it'll keep her amused. The dames are tickled with it, —don't take much to tickle 'em. I use it myself, only I don't waste it on them girls who're watched by their families all the time."

In a city like Iquitos, where there is so much irregularity among the girls of lower caste, those of the upper strata are even more closely guarded by their parents than usual, yet the average Latin-American mother will trust a gringo more readily than one of her own countrymen, and by the third evening we were allowed to stroll as far as the malecon, provided the two couples remained together. The malecon was more conducive to romance than the crowded plaza. There



were palms overhead, the breezes were soothing, and upon the broad expanse of the Amazon the moonbeams danced as moonbeams should dance on such occasions. Evidently Creighton's new phrase was a complete success, for Carmelita's eyes were more lustrous than ever upon our return.

"You know," he told me afterwards, "I felt like a silly ass, saying the idiotic phrase all the time, but she liked it. If I didn't repeat it once every ten minutes, she'd ask for it."

Throughout the week, we missed but one or two evenings, when rain necessitated a postponement of the evening's regular schedule. Then we sat at the café with the other Englishmen. Englishmen in the tropics are most methodical in their drinking. Whereas the American will drink anything at any time, the average Englishman will drink as an invalid takes medicine; at certain hours in the morning he has gin and ginger, at certain hours of the afternoon he has whiskey and soda, at a certain time before dinner he has a certain number of cocktails—usually having ascertained just how many cocktails are required to put him in a pleasant mood without making him drunk—and after dinner he brings his day to a successful finish by drinking certain cordials at certain hours until bed time, keeping himself exhilarated throughout the day but seldom permitting himself to become intoxicated. Like the miners in the Andes, who blamed their indulgence to the necessities of the altitude, the residents of

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Iquitos blamed theirs to the necessities of the tropical heat.

When Kelly's other duties permitted, he joined the gathering, and the stories of his adventures were rather entertaining. The Rio Napo, where his mines were situated, is famous for the deposits of gold among its sands, deposits almost inaccessible because of the Ecuadorean headhunters, the Tibaron Indians, who by some art unknown to science can shrivel the heads of their victims to the size of oranges without marring the features or complexion. I had seen one of these monstrosities for sale in a curio shop in Colon.

"It wasn't a blond head with a bristly mustache?" inquired Kelly.

"No."

"Then it wasn't Dave."

Dave was a former partner of Kelly's. One of the first prospectors to visit the dangerous river, Dave—I've forgotten his last name—had gone up the river alone, had washed some \$40,000 worth of gold out of the sands in a very few weeks, and upon his return to Iquitos, had lost it in one night to a professional gambler.

"That didn't worry him," said Kelly. "He thought he'd get plenty more again, so back he went. I found his body up there with six arrows in it. I never found his head."

I have heard many stories of treasure-seekers who make fortunes over-night in South America. Thinking back over the men I have met, and I met

nearly every Anglo-Saxon in Peru at the time of my visit, I can not remember meeting one who, if he made his fortune over-night, managed to keep any of it. The wealthy men who remained wealthy were those who had accumulated their money by slow, hard work, as most men accumulate it at home. Invariably they were of the type that can make good anywhere.

Sunday arrived and passed at Iquitos with only one social function. On this one day the little narrow gauge railroad ordinarily used for hauling freight from the wharves to the warehouses, became a passenger line. A dinky little wood-burning engine made its appearance, dragging three funny little open cars, and all Iquitos went for a ride around the block. Society, distinguished by white collars and shoes, occupied one coach; the bourgeoisie, distinguished by either one of these articles, occupied another; and the common people, distinguished by neither, occupied the third. The dinky little engine tooted its dinky little whistle, and the cars went rattling around and around the square, the first-class passengers sitting up stiff and prim, while the third-class whooped and cheered and ridiculed their less fortunate fellows whose week's labor had not earned the ten centavos necessary for admittance to the city's one social function.

Each morning since sending my S. O. S. to Griffis I had gone to the bank to inquire about money, and each morning I learned that the money had not arrived. Being distrustful of

Peruvian officialdom, I had also visited the wireless station to make sure that my message had been dispatched.

“Your sending apparatus is all right?” I demanded at each visit.

“Si, señor, it is perfect.”

Again I visited the Prefect, and after interrupting another dissertation upon disarmament, the Tacna-Arica dispute, and the necessity of dismembering the Turkish Empire, I received the information that he, too, was anxiously awaiting instructions from Lima about my case, that he was sure the Lima government had made a mistake in not giving me the proper credentials promised, that he knew my claims were just, but that he was unable to act until he received instructions from Lima.

When I went to the English resident who had advised me before, he again laughed uproariously:

“By jove, that’s good! The sending apparatus is working, but the receiving apparatus is broken, and nobody knows how soon they’ll fix it. Griffis can’t possibly send you money—unless you want to wait three months for the mail. But they’ll all jolly you. That’s the Peruvian for you!”

Here I am tempted to indulge in a final generalization about the pretense and insincerity of the Peruvians, yet thinking back over my experiences I can not forget that during all my travels, with the possible exception of this instance, I

had been accorded a courtesy and hospitality far surpassing any that an unknown Peruvian could expect in our own country. Undoubtedly it was a generous impulse that led the cabinet minister in Lima to extend his invitation, although once having extended it and having realized that he had exceeded his authority, he had used rather questionable methods in deliberately giving me insufficient testimonials. Certainly, I could not blame the Prefect for not wishing to give up part of his own salary to pay the expenses of an unaccredited newspaper man. Much as I felt inclined to ridicule his superficial politeness, I did find it more soothing than if he had kicked me out of his office.

When the monthly steamer arrived, the British consul, who was also agent for the steamer, gave me the missionary rate of half-fare, for which I still had enough money to pay, so I purchased a ticket and left instructions at the bank cancelling any orders that Griffis might send.

Returning from the bank, I ran into Kelly.

"Come on, Foster, I need help!" he gasped, seizing me by the arm, and rushing me headlong in the direction of our hotel. He was puffing excitedly as he ran. "It's that idiot—Creighton. I've got to get him out of town. Damn these streets. Same thing happened to me in Mexico. My partner—'nother damned idiot—got engaged to a girl, and I had to rush 'im out of town, an' wired her folks he was shot by bandits—damn these customs—you wink twice at a girl and down



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comes papa—damn these streets—with a Bible in one hand and a priest in the other.”

“But what’s Creighton done?” I demanded.

“Done? Damned idiot—weren’t you with him last night when he done it?”

But by this time we had reached the Palacio and were rushing upstairs. Creighton was seated on the balcony of his room, as innocent and pink-cheeked as ever.

“Come on,” panted Kelly. “Get your stuff together. We’re starting for the Rio Napa. Shake a leg.”

Creighton stared at him with the unruffled composure characteristic of young Englishmen.

“Why all the jolly row?”

Kelly was already gathering his kit together.

“There’s a launch leaves in ten minutes. It’s the only way out. Damned idiot, don’t you know enough not to say ‘Yes’ when a girl asks you whether you’re goin’ to marry her?”

“Eh, what’s all that?”

“Why, you idiot, that’s what she asked you last night. Thought you said you knew when to say ‘Yes.’ ”

Creighton, to Kelly’s evident surprise, merely grinned.

“It’s no joke,” Kelly exploded. “I just met ’er old man, and he was tickled to death. Damned idiot hugged me. If there’s anything I don’t like it’s bein’ hugged by men. Come on! Shake a leg! I’ll get you out of it!”

Creighton’s grin expanded.



"But look here, dear silly old ass, suppose I'm not so very keen on getting out of it?"

Kelly dropped his kit to the floor with a crash.

"I'll be damned!"

Then he turned to me. "I hope you didn't say 'Yes,' to her big fat cow of a sister!"

But fortunately I hadn't. Anyhow, Maria had not asked me.

I did not see the end of the happy romance. I saw only the end of another affair, a tragedy. The young Englishman who had been poisoned by his Indian girl died. The consul decided to bury him here in Iquitos.

"I can't send that body home, you know," he said. "I've been writing his mother that he was ill with the fever. She's a fine old lady—silver white hair, you know—and she thinks he's the finest boy in the world."

The service at the consul's residence was attended by the entire male population of Iquitos, not because the deceased had been so popular, but because anything which breaks the monotony of life is well attended in Iquitos. After the service they all rushed out like so many children to climb on board the cars of the narrow-gauge railway. A branch line ran out into the jungle to the cemetery. As the dinky little engine drew us along the streets of the city and out into the suburbs where the tiled buildings became thatched huts, the mourners chatted gayly among themselves, while some of them flirted joyously with half-naked Indian girls along the way.

The little plot used by a few Protestants in town was situated far out in the wilderness, surrounded by a rank forest of wild cane. When the body had been lowered into the grave, and the consul was reading the Church of England ritual, the "mourners" were still chatting in groups, quite oblivious to the seriousness of the occasion. For some time the consul paid no attention, reading solemnly in English, his voice scarcely audible above the babel of Castilian. Finally, he paused, and raised his voice:

"Gentlemen," he said in Spanish, "I'm burying a man. Do you understand that? I'm burying a man."

The Peruvians fell silent. For a moment the consul stared at the crowd, as though in readiness to thrash any man who dared to interrupt the silence, to thrash the whole male population of Iquitos if necessary. Then with solemn face, he continued his reading, "Dust to dust; ashes to ashes," according the last rites to a countryman of whom he disapproved, yet who, after all, was his countryman.

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

### DESCENDING THE GREATEST OF RIVERS

THE departure of the steamer *Belem* from Iquitos was an important event. The townspeople lined the wall of the malecon, while a flock of barefoot girls trooped upon the wharf to bid the Brazilian crew farewell. Persons of real or fancied importance came on board, as they did back on the West Coast, to assemble about the tables of the open-air dining room, which served also as a bar. A perspiring canteen steward ran from table to table, listening to a dozen orders at once, forgetting half of them, and getting the other half balled up. One might have imagined that the steamer was carrying away the city's last crate of beer.

Eventually the whistle blew. There was another ineffectual clamoring for drinks, followed in due time by an exodus to the shore. As the *Belem* edged slowly out into the river, the smaller boats tooted their whistles in salute, and the crowds along the malecon waved their hats frantically. We were off on our sixteen days' journey down the Amazon.

Besides myself and my two missionary companions, there was but one other American passenger—a woman, who had come up with the

steamer from Pará, had taken one look at Iquitos, and was going back. Miss Holmes was an educator and lecturer, who was just completing her tour of South America, suffering internally at times because people mistook her for a tourist. She abominated tourists. They were so lacking in those little things that mark the person of really discriminating taste.

The Rev. Dr. Oliver was delighted to find a fellow educator with whom he could discuss his profession. He pulled his deck chair beside hers, and began to tell her what South America needed. Half an hour later, however, he came back to the stateroom with his collar wilted, crawled into his bunk, and lay there, breathing heavily.

"What's the matter?" demanded Herbert.

"That woman!"

"What did she do to you?"

"Nothing. Nothing at all. There just isn't anything I can tell her that she hasn't already heard. In fact, she seems to have known everything there is to know since infancy."

Having rested, he got out a book on Amazonian travel, and studied it. Later in the afternoon, I saw him approach her like a conquering hero. We were anchored in mid-stream at the time, and natives, dressed in costumes of shredded bark resembling the grass skirts of the South Seas, were paddling about in canoes, harpooning turtles. Several of them on the bank carried blow-guns.

"A most interesting weapon, that blow-gun,"



ON THE LOWER DECK OF THE BELÉM



STEAMER BELÉM ON THE AMAZON





began Oliver. "It is made from two separate pieces of wood, each half-hollowed so that when lashed together with fiber they have a perfectly round aperture in the center. They are then smeared with the black wax of the melipona bee. Some of them are ten feet in length. They are made from pucuna-caspi wood, while the darts are made from the wood of the inayuca palm, and poisoned with ticuna-ampi poison reputed to kill within a minute. However, by placing a pinch of salt in the mouth of the victim, it is said that this poison may be neutralized."

Then he waited, defiantly, for her to dispute any of it. She merely smiled pleasantly, nodding in a bored manner that seemed to say, "Every one knows that." But what she did say was:

"I see you've been reading my book on the Amazon. I wrote it on my last trip up here."

Oliver fled in utter route.

The Indians did not approach close enough for a snap-shot, and our steamer did not pause long enough for us to go ashore. It was our only glimpse of picturesque Indians during the entire descent of the Amazon. One must ascend the little branches to see anything interesting. Along the main river the natives are mostly mulattoes. They either wear civilized clothing or go naked. For some reason, while a nude Indian maiden seems to represent romance, a nude colored lady doesn't.

The second day out from Iquitos brought us to Leticia, the last Peruvian port, a collection of mixed thatch and calamina shacks, clustered around a wireless station. A few hundred yards farther down the river was the Brazilian fort. The boundary between the two countries on the north side of the river, is a figurative line through the jungle. South of the Amazon it follows the Javari River.

Our steamer was to make a day's run up the Javari. The little river was hardly any wider than the steamer itself, and to enter it with the Amazon sweeping past its narrow mouth at more than five knots an hour was difficult. The captain himself took the wheel. As the steamer turned broadside to the main current, the Amazon threatened to whirl it around and overturn it. It collided heavily with the bank at the mouth of the Javari, wavered for a long moment, and then slowly crawled into the narrow stream.

It kept on crawling all night, negotiating the difficult bends of the little river, and in the morning we awoke in Remate dos Malles, which means in English "The culmination of all evil." The little village is well named. Perched on stilts in land which for eight months of the year is swampland, it seems to exude the fever of which its inhabitants all show the marks. It is the town's habits rather than its unhealthfulness, however, which has gained it the name. When the surrounding rubber district is inundated by floods, the rubber-gatherers come to Remate dos

Malles to amuse themselves by vice and dissipation until the floods recede.

We had come up the Javari to take on a cargo of rubber. The fever-worn mulattoes brought it on in big gummy balls, two or three feet in diameter, which bounced with the appearance of lightness as they struck the deck, but which are in reality very heavy. The Javari is one of the few districts where rubber is still worked. Rubber has always been more profitable along the Javari than elsewhere, because of its situation between Peru and Brazil. When the tax on rubber is lower in Brazil, the gatherers claim to have gathered the rubber on the Brazilian side; when lower in Peru, on the Peruvian side.

All day we lay at Remate dos Malles, on the Brazilian side, sweltering in the heat. The narrow, winding river, bordered by jungle, lacked the refreshing breezes of the wider Amazon. The rubber was all on board, but we waited several hours for the port officials to issue the necessary clearance papers. They saw the big steamer only once a month, and sometimes not that often; perhaps they enjoyed seeing it there, and deliberately kept it waiting.

It was late afternoon when we made our way back toward the main river, and the crocodiles were out on the bank for their evening *paseo*. The bank seemed lined with them, lying like black logs half out of the water, while others swam about near the shore, their long snouts raised to look at the steamer. Passengers and crew

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brought out rifles, and shot at them as fast as they could reload. The crocodiles did not seem at all timid; unless a bullet landed within a foot of them, they did not take the trouble to submerge. But when they did duck, they did it with amazing agility, disappearing almost as quickly as the bullet landed.

It was a river that reeked with the romance of the tropical jungle, but with the depressing romance of deadly swamps, of snakes coiled among rotting stumps, of fever and malaria—and we breathed more freely as we came out once more upon the broad Amazon, now bathed in the radiance of a silver moon and countless stars.

The *Belem* was a broad flat-bottomed steamer, built especially for the river service. It drew only ten foot of water when fully loaded, burned wood which natives piled along the bank for it, and anchored itself by the simple process of running onto the soft mud flats beside the shore. It had been built for the river service, and its state-rooms were merely screened with wire on the deck side.

The officers and crew were Brazilians, and their Portuguese, despite its similarity to Spanish, sounded unfamiliar at first. We addressed the stewards in Spanish, and sometimes they understood it. They always nodded and said "Yes," whether they did or not. It was annoying to ask for a towel, and be told "Yes," and not get the towel. Also, if we inquired what kind of meat

they were serving us, we learned that it was "Yes."

But when they did understand us, their service was excellent. I found all the Brazilians as courteous as their Spanish neighbors, although they sometimes lack a polish of manner found among Peruvians. They are somewhat inclined to ridicule the foreigner who speaks poor Portuguese, which a Peruvian would never do, but it is done good-naturedly and I believe it to be the result of a higher degree of frankness.

Miss Holmes, however, abominated them. She had met most of the races in the world, and the Brazilians were the lowest. Particularly did she abominate a stout Brazilian merchant who joined us at one of the ports and who occupied the seat next to her at the table.

"I can't stand this creature," she remarked one day in his presence. "He does not seem to realize that I would pass him the dishes if he asked for them. It is not necessary for him to climb half-way across the table to snatch at them."

The climb-and-snatch system of self-service seemed to be pretty generally in vogue throughout Latin America, I pointed out, and not confined to the Brazilians. The man's behavior might be due to his fear that we would not understand his language if he asked for the things. Or perhaps he did not wish to trouble us.

"That's it," agreed Miss Holmes. "He knows



how annoyed he himself would be if he had to pause in his eating to help us to anything."

We also had with us another fat merchant, reputed to be a Brazilian turtle-king. He had his own fancy tea-cup and silverware at the table, but frequently shared his wealth with the rest of us by treating the whole ship from his large stock of strictly-fresh turtle eggs, which are considered a great delicacy in these parts.

The two merchants were competing to corner the local turtle market. Both had several assistants on board, and whenever we stopped along the bank at a group of thatched huts, they would rush ashore and buy more turtles. The lower deck became a shambling mass of the big, ungainly creatures. There were pens of them, and barrels of them, while everywhere that space permitted, others would be deposited on their backs. Now and then one of them would attempt to turn right-side-up, and in doing so would stick his flapper into his neighbor's eye. The neighbor, kicking out in protest, would start another neighbor kicking, and presently the lower deck would be a mass of waving flappers, as the big bodies rocked in futile effort to overturn themselves.

Turtle steaks formed the principal course at meal. They are not at all bad, and we enjoyed them until one day the cook served a particularly large turtle baked in the shell. The waiter brought it in with the head and other appendages still intact and shaking up and down as though still imbued with life.



When Miss Holmes raised her hands in horror, the stout Brazilian whose manners she had criticized saw the gesture and smiled.

"Really," he said in perfect English, "it isn't half as bad as it looks."

The sixth day brought us to the mouth of the Putumayo, the famous rubber river. Here the bug-hunters joined us. They were two entomologists from a prominent American university. Dr. B., the leader of the expedition, was normal. Dr. A., his companion, however, was the embodiment of the humorist's conception of a bug-hunter. He was quite the best informed man I have ever met, but he was interested in his work to the exclusion of other things. His flowing red beard had flowed with increasing fluency during his many days in the wilderness, until it made the Amazonian jungle look like a desert in contrast. His clothes, originally selected with the lack of taste peculiar to a genius, had not been improved by chasing butterflies across the swamps.

Miss Holmes surveyed him rather critically as he took the place opposite her at the table. He seemed oblivious to the unspoken comment. But suddenly his little blue eyes fixed themselves intently upon her through their gold-rimmed spectacles.

"Don't move your head," he breathed.

Slowly, with his eyes on hers as though he were a hypnotist, he started to crawl toward her

across the table, his right knee in a soup plate and his left on a platter of turtle eggs.

"Stop him!" gasped some one.

Believing that his jungle-wanderings had crazed him, I seized a sauce-bottle to hit him on the head. But he only grabbed something from her collar, examined it, and placed it carefully in his specimen case.

"It's a pterophomis," he explained, resuming his dinner.

That night both the professors brought out their nets, and chased moths around the deck. Crew and passengers regarded them with derisive grins at first, but gradually getting the idea, they began one after another to join the hunt. Old or young, we clambered up the rail, mounted chairs, crawled about on hands and knees, climbed the mast—every one on board helping the scientists.

"There's a monster!" somebody shouted.

We ran after it, around stanchions and ventilators, upstairs to the upper deck, around and around the smoke-stack, downstairs again to the lower deck, the professor following in increasing excitement. Back behind the galley one fellow made a flying dive, throwing his coat upon the floor.

"I have it!" he exclaimed in triumph.

"What does it look like?" inquired the professor.

"Never saw anything like it before—long and green with things like legs."

"Hold it tight. I'll reach under the coat and chloroform it. We must not let it escape."

He raised a corner of the coat carefully, and held the opened chloroform jar beneath it. There was no movement, no wriggling, no indication that life remained. Cautiously he removed the coat, disclosing a long, green banana, which some practical joker had stuck with matches in imitation of legs and horns.

The professor sniffed. He was not offended at being made the butt of a practical joke; he merely felt sorry for people who treated entomology with such levity.

With the bug-hunters there joined us two Brazilian moving picture operators, engaged in making films of the Amazon country. They had been up the Putumayo River with the naturalist, and had gone to the villages of the Ocaina Indians for the purpose of filming a naked Indian dance, only to learn that these Indians had been taught by British rubber gatherers to wear civilized clothing.

The old tribal custom of "dolling up" for a dance had consisted merely in donning a new coat of paint, arranged upon the body in intricate designs and supplemented with pieces of fern and lichen, pasted on with the fresh sap of the rubber tree. But the good old days, for writers and movie operators, are rapidly passing from South America. The present-day costume for the Putumayo dances was a suit of overalls.

The camera men, as they approached the large

open structure in which the function was to be held, had observed parties of naked Indians approaching, and this sight—so they said—had given rise to the highest expectations, for these Brazilian operators were young men, and professed the greatest fondness for dancing. But when the time for the ceremony arrived, the Indians sat down and donned overalls. In vain the operators offered them inducements to dance naked. They had brought the wrong inducements. Knowing that the Huitotas, a neighboring tribe, were very fond of wooden plugs for ear-ornaments, they had brought along a truck-load of wooden spools. But these Indians were Ocainas, and it seems that the Ocainas were wearing brass plugs in their ears this season.

“Their objection to undressing was not due to modesty,” explained Professor A., who had witnessed the function. “They merely wished to be photographed in their new clothes. They felt as an American woman might feel if forced to be photographed in her last year’s styles.”

The Ocaina village was one of those whose natives gather rubber for the Peruvian Amazon Corporation, whose alleged treatment of the Indians caused so much scandal back in 1911, when Sir Roger Casement visited the region for the British Government and reported that the rubber gatherers were cutting off the fingers or ears of their employees as a punishment for not bringing in enough rubber, and in some cases were burning the Indians alive. I had met various



ALONG THE AMAZON



SANTAREM ON THE AMAZON





men in Iquitos who had been in the region at the time of these alleged atrocities, and while some of them assured me that the reports were exaggerated, others assured me that only half of the truth had been told. Both naturalists and movie men informed me that at the present time the Indians are well treated by their employers.

On our tenth day the steamer left the brown waters of the Amazon and turned up the inky black stream of the Rio Negro, or Black River, toward Manaus, the second city of the river district.

Like the water of many Amazonian tributaries, that of the Rio Negro is stained by the vegetation of its upper banks, and is in reality no dirtier than the brown water of the other rivers, despite its deadly appearance. The fact that much endemic fever is found in villages up the Rio Negro has led some people to ascribe unsanitary qualities to its water. The dark fluid is good to drink, and possesses natural antiseptic properties, but its appearance is against it. It is so black that where it joins the Amazon there is a distinct line of demarcation, on one side of which is black water, and on the other side brown. Nor do they mix until they have traveled side by side for several miles. Where the steamer's bow throws up a wave of foam in the Negro, the foam is not white and frothy, as foam is supposed to be, but dark like bubbling molasses.

Manaos is only an hour's run up the Black River. Above its pleasing cluster of red-tiled

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roofs, there rise two monumental buildings. One is the opera house, the other the brewery. Practically every city in Brazil possesses a handsome municipal opera house, for the Brazilians appear to be even greater lovers of music than their neighbors. That at Manaus stands on the highest point in the city, at the top of the principal boulevard, and its dome towers above everything in town. This dome is a huge affair, with an intricate native design in yellow, purple, and green, a hideous combination of colors, yet rather effective, and certainly striking. The other monument, the brewery, looks more like a hotel. As a rule, breweries are apt to be useful rather than ornamental, but this one is both.

Manaos is capital of the state of Amazonas, and has a population of 75,000 persons. It is situated 1,000 miles from the mouth of the Amazon, but steamers drawing as much as 23 feet of water can ascend to the port at any time, regardless of season. Many important liners touch here.

It is a thoroughly modern city, with good hotels, good stores, and all conveniences. Particularly notable is its trolley system. Trolleys run on nearly every street, and even out into the jungle where nobody lives, for the system was laid out in the old rubber days, when Manaus was expected to grow. The fall in rubber has stopped the growth of the city, although it has not entirely killed it as it killed Iquitos, but the trolley cars still run out into the woods for the benefit of the

people who wish to take a ride at night to cool off after the heat of the day.

It had taken our steamer ten days to descend from Iquitos to Manaos; it took us six days more to reach Pará. The length of the Amazon depends entirely upon what the individual chooses to call the Amazon. If it starts at Manaos, at the junction of the Rio Negro with the main stream, as some geographers choose to consider it, it is 1,000 miles long. If it starts at the Peruvian border, as others claim, it is 2,000 miles long. If it starts above Iquitos, where the Ucayali and Marañón unite, it is nearly 2,500 miles long. If one considers the upper Marañón as part of the original Amazon, it is about 3,500 miles long. All quibbling aside, it isn't such a small river, considering that it is located way out in the jungle.

Many of its tributaries are so immense that were their greatness not diminished by the greater greatness of the Amazon itself, they would be world-famous rivers. Where they join the Amazon, the flood of water they empty into it is so great that they frequently cause a phenomenon locally known as a *remanse*. This is a flowing of water upstream for a distance, usually along one or both banks, while the center of the great river still continues downstream as regular rivers are supposed to do. At first, one has a peculiar feeling that things are wrong when he sees his steamer gliding downstream with the central current, while a canoe near the shore is being carried swiftly upstream by the *remanse*.

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Where the upstream and downstream currents meet there is a series of tremendous whirlpools that would quickly suck under a swimmer or even a small boat.

The floods that result from the tremendous rise of all these rivers during the rainy season can well be imagined. The Amazon basin is extremely flat. Manaos, although a thousand miles up the river, has an altitude of only 38 meters above sea-level. Above Manaos we had noticed that the grayish white trunks of the trees above the bank were stained black to the height of several feet from the receded high waters. Below Manaos, where the high waters of the last rainy season had not yet subsided, both banks were covered so that the trees appeared to rise from the river itself. There was no solid land in sight. The few ramshackle dwellings we passed were built on stilts, and had canoes tied to the front porch. Any resident desiring to take a stroll in his back yard, had to do so in a canoe.

The principal city between Manaos and Pará is Santarem, a town of 10,000 inhabitants. When we anchored here, fully 9,999 of them came on board to sell us the native products. I could not ascertain why the other fellow didn't come. The native products consisted mainly of gourds, cut in half, dried, and stained black, to be painted over with intricate designs in gold and white.

The Amazon trip became tedious. Hour after hour as the days passed, the tangled masses of vines and trees and palms slid by us, followed by

more vines and more trees and more palms, varied occasionally by other vines and other trees and other palms. Now and then one huge tree with orange or purple blossoms stood out from the background. Occasionally there was a brown cane hut, with a brown thatched roof above it, with naked brown children playing on the doorstep, and half-naked brown parents watching them.

Once in a while we passed a dugout canoe, sometimes with a rounded, barrel-like roof of thatch to shelter the paddlers. At rare intervals we met a quaint old-fashioned steamboat, with side-wheels or steam-operated oars, lumbering slowly along near the bank. But these sights were infrequent. Usually we saw only more vines and more trees and more palms.

Our principal amusement consisted in listening to the never-ceasing argument between Dr. A. and Miss Holmes. The professor's scientific mind insisted on analyzing everything that was said. If I remarked that there was a nice fresh breeze blowing, he would point out that according to the U. S. Weather Bureau's classifications of breezes, a fresh breeze was one of so many miles per hour. The breeze to-day, as he estimated it—he regretted that he had not the proper instruments for measuring it exactly—was a breeze of only half as many miles per hour, and therefore would be classified not as a “fresh” breeze, but a “mild” breeze.

No matter how trivial one's remark, if it were



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not absolutely correct, he could not rest until he had straightened it out, and arrived at the truth. Most of us readily admitted that we were low-brows and given to inaccuracy, but Miss Holmes held her ground. Accordingly he began to follow her around the deck from morning until night, proving to her that everything she said was wrong.

The Rev. Dr. Oliver had felt a trifle hostile toward the professor at first. He had, as a measure of accommodation, carried one of the professor's wasp nests in his stateroom, and not knowing that it was loaded, had placed it against the wall under the hook where his trowsers were hanging. The particular church which Dr. Oliver represents does not believe in dancing, but Dr. Oliver's performance immediately after donning those trowsers must have been excusable under the circumstances. He had since borne a little resentment toward the naturalist, but now, observing his verbal battles with Miss Holmes, Oliver became his enthusiastic supporter.

"If he can contradict her, and get away with it," he said "*I'm for him.*"

And long before we reached this destination Miss Holmes had given up her verbal battle with the professor and fled in utter rout. On our last day, we discovered her down on the lower deck, seeking seclusion behind the firewood.

"Where's the other debater?" Herbert inquired.

She made a gesture of helpless despair.

"That man!"



"What's he been doing now?"

"Nothing. Nothing at all. The infant prodigy! I can't tell him a thing that he doesn't contradict!"

Perhaps the Rev. Dr. Oliver's second dance, executed in the privacy of his stateroom, was again excusable.

## CHAPTER TWENTY

### AMONG THE BEACHCOMBERS IN BRAZIL

**I**MMEDIATELY upon our landing in Pará, my companions of the *Belem* sailed out of town, the missionaries headed for their office in Buenos Aires, the professor and Miss Holmes for the United States.

Once more I had arrived penniless in a strange city. Herbert had offered to lend me money, but after my good fortune in Peru, I had unlimited confidence in myself, and a loan seemed quite unnecessary. I did not realize that in Peru I had visited a country booming with big Anglo-Saxon concerns, and that in the Amazon I had visited a region temporarily paralyzed in its commerce through the slump in the rubber industry.

My wardrobe had increased from one Palm Beach suit and one Panama hat during my sojourn on the West Coast, but now, as a result of the wear and tear of a cross-continent journey, it was back to normal. Nevertheless, having learned to simulate affluence as well as the Latins themselves, I walked into the second best hotel in Pará, and engaged an attractive room. Brazilian money being extremely low in exchange at the moment, the cost of a room and board at the lead-

ing hotels amounted to only two American dollars a day.

My problem, however, was to find not only the daily two dollars but enough to pay my passage home. I had seen enough of South America for one trip, and while far from homesick, I was experiencing a temporary recovery from the wanderlust. And having engaged the room, I started out in search of employment.

And I made the discovery that there was not an American firm in the entire city. The American consular agent, who was also agent for the U. S. Shipping Board steamers, constituted the entire American colony. In fact, Americans, while numerous on the West Coast, were so scarce along the Amazon that the average native classified us as "Englishmen," and seemed astonished to learn that the Anglo-Saxon race had any subdivisions. There were few English firms in Pará, but commerce being at a stand-still, they needed no more employees.

Pará also was notable for the absence of Tropical Tramps. The T. T., while apt to wander all over South America, always heads for a region where the presence of large companies makes employment certain. Pará, however, was infested with American beachcombers, some of the sailor-without-a-ship type, but most of them from a Shipping Board vessel which had run upon a near-by sandbar and left them stranded. Some of them were awaiting transportation home at the Shipping Board's expense, others were await-

ing an opportunity to sign up on some other vessel, and a few, having succumbed to the temptations of wine, women, and warm climate, did not care whether they ever went home.

As I was wandering about town in the evening after a day's fruitless search for a job, one of these beachcombers accosted me.

"Say, bo, don't you come from Brooklyn?"

There was something vaguely familiar about the man.

"My name's Glamm. Frank Glamm. I used to work for your butcher, before they started prohibition in the States."

Prohibition, he explained, had driven him out of the butcher's trade into a steward's job on a foreign-bound steamship. Yet, while Glamm's dissipated face was not prepossessing, I felt relieved at meeting any one who spoke English. But he quickly displayed the begging tendency of the true beachcomber.

"Can you lend me the price of a drink?" he requested. "I missed my ship, you see, got a bun on, you see—"

"I'm sorry, Glamm," I apologized. "I've just hocked my camera, and all I've got is two dollars."

"Two dollars! Come around to the gambling house. I've got a system that'll make it two hundred."

I had never been lucky at gambling, but I was ready to leap at any ray of hope. We went around to the house—they run openly in Pará—

and pushed our way through a throng of well-dressed Brazilians who surrounded a green-covered table, blocked into squares and numbered. Glamm placed the two dollars on one of the numbers, and a stony-faced gentleman with a big diamond in his necktie shook some dice out of a box.

I understood neither Glamm's system nor the game itself, but when the stony-faced gentleman reached over and put my last two dollars in his pocket, no one else objected, and so I didn't.

"There goes my drink," said Glamm sadly.

I started to walk out. I was "on the beach" at last, and the Tropical Tramp's greatest pride in his self-supported travels, is to keep off "the beach." In a large room to one side of the entrance I saw a piano. It was the first piano I had seen since leaving the West Coast, and something inside of me impelled me to walk over and shake the dust from its cover, and play "Home, Sweet Home."

The instrument was horribly out of tune, but having finished "Home, Sweet Home," a further inspiration came to me to strike up a rag. To my surprise, Glamm began to sing in a tenor voice, a voice somewhat nasal and somewhat discolored with whiskey, yet a remarkably good voice according to cabaret standards. It attracted attention. The gambling-house was just on the outskirts of Pará's red light district, and young Brazilians, on their way to the district, began to drop into the room to listen. Brazilians are very

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fond of music, and while they themselves have little talent for American ragtime, they like it. The crowd grew and applauded.

"Give 'em another," Glamm would urge as I completed a piece, and off we would go again. Our selections were old ones, things that I had heard back in Panama almost two years before, but Glamm seemed to know them all. Finally the manager pushed his way to us, and began to splutter in Portuguese.

"Maybe he wants us to cut it out," I suggested.

"Cut it out nothing," Glamm exclaimed. "I'm goin' to sing 'till I get good an' ready to quit, an' no spig ain't goin' to stop me neither."

Punctuated by further spluttering from the manager, our performance continued. I decided that if we went to jail, I'd be relieved from paying board. Finally an Englishman in the crowd spoke up.

"I say, this gentleman's asking you if the two of you wouldn't care to accept a position playing here every night. It draws the crowd, you know."

Saved!

For several nights we performed there. It brought me enough for my living expenses, and very nearly paid for Glamm's whiskey. And it gave me an opportunity to wander about Pará and see the sights.

Pará is quite an attractive city. With some 200,000 population, it is the principal city of northern Brazil, and much more modern than





PARÁ IS AN ATTRACTIVE CITY



THE OPERA HOUSE AT PARÁ



Lima. It has an opera house, several theaters, several boulevards which resemble those of Paris, good stores, excellent hotels and restaurants, and many delightful, well-kept parks and plazas where tropical palms grow luxuriantly.

The Brazilians imitate the Parisians not only in their dress, but also in the architecture of their cities, and particularly in their customs. While the atmosphere of Spanish-America is Spanish, that of Portuguese-America is French. At night, on the main avenue, where the broad sidewalks are lined with little tables as in Paris, all the better-class residents assemble to sip their beverages, differing only from the Parisians in that the prevailing drink is *asahy*, a non-intoxicant brewed from the *asahy* palm. After the heat of the day—Pará is only  $1^{\circ}27'$  from the equator—the custom is most enjoyable.

But despite the attractiveness of Pará, I wanted to go home. And my remuneration as pianist in a gambling joint did not promise ever to get me there. From pride, I hesitated to cable home for money. Finally, however, when a steamer arrived from New York, due to return immediately, I went down to the American consulate to learn which cable would bring the quickest results.

“Why, I’ve got some mail for you,” said the consul. “Just came in on that same ship.”

It was the first mail I had received in months. I opened the letters eagerly. Then I gasped with surprise. Several stories I had written during

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my wandering had finally passed the editors, and this mail, forwarded from home, contained the drafts. And the peculiar thing about it is that I had simply taken true accounts of the experiences of a Tropical Tramp, and sold them as fiction.

"So you're an author, huh?" grunted Frank Glamm. "I thought you was one of them Tropical Tramps."

By going steerage, I could take him with me. Much as the T. T. despises the chronic beach-comber, it was contrary to the rules of the road to leave a fellow-countryman stranded.

But Glamm only shook his head.

"Not on your life, bo. If the United States wants Frank Glamm back, they got to cut out prohibition."

And so I came back first-class.

Ever since my return, from all sorts and conditions of men, I have heard the question, "What are the chances down there for a fellow like me?" and this is the question I have tried to answer throughout my story. South America is a land of opportunity, but its opportunities are either for the very big corporation or the very big man. The Americans who will succeed there must be of a sufficiently easy-going disposition to win the good-will of his easy-going neighbors, yet strong enough to resist the I'll-do-it-to-morrow attitude that comes with the langor of the tropics; clever enough to override many difficult problems, yet diplomatic enough to do so without offending the sensitive Latin Americans; strong enough to re-

sist the vitiating moral atmosphere of the Spanish social system, yet broad-minded enough to condone the delinquencies in his fellows.

For the average man, success in South America is more difficult than at home. In our own highly organized communities, we have little adventure to lead us astray, and most of us have to work in order to live. In South America, adventure is always within reach to lead one from the path of industry, and if one grows tired of working, he can wander back into the jungle and eat the hogs that eat the oranges he can't eat. Personally, if I had stayed there for twenty years instead of two, I should have remained an adventure hunter, and would have returned, as I did return, with a Palm Beach suit, a Panama hat, and a broken cane.

Yet presently I shall hit the trail again; I shall forget the Latin American's many faults; I shall remember that he is after all a likable chap, that life in his country is pleasant and enjoyable; I shall begin to dream once more of lonely trails, of quaint Moorish cities, of nights beneath the tropical stars, and I'll go drifting back to the land of romance, as does every one else who once has tasted a bit of adventure. The wanderlust will call its victims.

THE END











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